

**UFW DOCUMENTATION PROJECT
ONLINE DISCUSSION
September 2004**

Alberto Escalante, 9/1/04 (1)

RE: Manuel Chavez and UFW Border Patrols

In a message dated 8/31/2004 . . . [Nonie Graddy] writes:

I knew nothing about the "border patrol" but it does not surprise me.

Sisters & Brothers,

Sadly, I do know about the UFW Border Patrol (White arm bands with a Black Eagle & the words "UFW BORDER PATROL" written on it.) But in those days of "any means to an end" a great many things like nonviolence fell by the wayside. Only to be picked up, dusted off or the blood washed out and everything made to look presentable again. Manuel was like the bogeyman. And too often he was blamed for things he didn't do. But, he did some things that eventually people finally said "Enough!" People like Nonie (L Graddy). Until then though many of us were too afraid of what he was capable of doing to say anything about what went on. I'm only glad that as the union grew up, his ways of doing things were no longer needed, but were instead held in contempt. Unfortunately, I still run into people whose very first experience with the UFW was a beating they received out in the middle of the Arizona desert. Along with the warning: "De aqui adelante no se permiten esquiroles vivos!" Translated into English...."No Scabs allowed past this point! Not live ones, anyway!" Not very pretty nor "P.C." But...it did dry up a virtual human river that ran at night, bringing fresh "Scab" meat up from Mexico to replenish to ones that were being "discouraged" at the farms where we were picketing. Most of the ones who were educated either by Manuel's methods or through more humane and less violent means still resented being man-handled by the United Farm Workers. If you are trying to convince a person you want to be his friend, beating him with a club and putting a gun to his head isn't the approach I'd use! Even if he was attempting to break a strike...

Alberto Escalante

Chris Schneider, 9/1/04

RE: Ukegawa Brothers - "Rancho de los diablos"

Many folks will recall the Ukegawa Brothers in north San Diego County. The workers called them "Los Diablos." It is my understanding that the workers there were among the first to organize when the ALRA came into effect. I recall that the very first ALRA unfair labor practice ever filed in the San Diego office of the ALRA was against Ukegawa Brothers. Many followed and eventually the ALRB held a hearing on many consolidated unfair labor practices, the lead number being: 75-CE-01-SD---(the number indicates that the charge was filed in 1975 and was number one filed that year in San Diego)

When I left the union in 1989 the case was still glaciating its way through the ALRB/courts processes. I couldn't believe that it could take so long for the system to work.

Today I attended a press conference where Don Villarejo, formerly of the California Institute for Rural Studies at U.C. Davis, released a report on the impact of land retirement on farm workers on the west side of the central valley. Speaking to him afterwards he told me he was doing some work with the the ALRB involving some old cases. He asked me to guess what company and I said something to the effect of "as slow as the process is, probably the Ukegawa Brothers case for 1975." Don said that he was indeed working on helping the ALRB locate assests for some very old Ukegawa cases.

Don asked who from the UFW had been the organizers. Since I was in Chicago at the time I wasn't certain but that I thought that Scott Washburn had been involved. Don is interested in

having contact with anyone from the UFW staff who may have participated in the organizing, unfair labor practice charges against Ukegawa Brothers. I offered to pass the information on to the list serve.

Don can be contacted at the above e-mail address. Who knows, with luck, the workers may get some back pay by next year on the 30th anniversary of being fired. (Can you imagine calculating 30 years of back pay with interest?)

Ellen Eggers, 9/1/04 (1)

RE: Manuel Chavez

Hey Abby, I'd say it's time to apologize to your sister in La Causa again. (Terry Scott, that is).. This is at least the second time you have totally attacked her for no good reason. Personally I don't think there is ever a good reason for being this nasty to a fellow Chavista (esp one who gave as many devoted years as Terry did). Cesar thought the world of Terry....can't you at least show her some respect for THAT reason...since that appears to be the only opinion that matters to you? Sorry to have to be so blunt, but you hurt all of us when you are so mean spirited to one of the "real deal" volunteers like Terry.

Ellen Eggers, 9/1/04 (2)

RE: Lupe Murguia

Kathy: Thank you for that beautiful tribute to Lupe, your "jefe." It was impressive! Please give Lupe my best and tell him I always enjoyed being his barber!! In addition to being a great guy, he had great hair too! Love, Ellen

Ellen Eggers, 9/1/04 (3)

RE: Gilbert Rodriguez, a Man of the People

And one more little thing that Gilbert did for me...when I had to travel to Yuma Arizona to argue a case before the infamous AERB, my son was only 11 days old...I took him with me, and Gilbert held him in the audience while I argued in front of the board. Little Tomas looked like a tiny little doll, all curled up on Gilbert's huge chest. It was a really very adorable site. (wish I had a photo!) Gilbert was a sweetheart, through and through! Ellen Eggers

Doug Adair, 9/1/04 (1)

RE: Manuel Chavez

In a message dated 8/29/04 . . . [Terry Scott] writes:

The Catholic Worker people mailed to me in La Paz. It's the front page of the Las Vegas newspaper showing me marching side by side with Cesar on our way to get arrested...

* * * *

Dear Terry and Abby and all.

It was I that sent in the quip about Manuel Chavez not being in the "sacrificios para la Causa" crowd, and I'm sorry if it contributed to misunderstandings. I never worked with Manuel, and on a personal level, I loathed him (mutual -- he threatened to shoot me once and Dolores saved my ass). He had a reputation for being a very good organizer, could take a difficult project and get it done, and his legacy for the union is all the good work he did. But he always seemed to have money in his pocket, for the project at hand (and less worry about receipts), and for personal, didn't seem to be on the \$5 a week personal expenses like most of the staff or Cesar or Padilla or Dolores, for that matter. He seemed to be like Leroy and Jim Drake and Jerry Cohen, a separate niche as far as money and budgets...

And I certainly joined Manuel in being cynical about the "sacrificios" ideology. My union years were the most exciting, rewarding, satisfying years of my life. I always was fed, lived in house with electricity, indoor plumbing, hot and cold water, fridge and stove (way, way better than most

of our members in Rio Grande City in 1967)... where's the "sacrificios"? And talk about drugs, sex, and rock and roll (all kinds of music)! For a 20-something single guy, Delano was all my dreams come true. At the Malcriado, "Sacrificios" was the tease when it was someone's turn to sweep the office or wash the dishes.

I was organized (by Padilla) on the basis of brothers and sisters coming together to build a union, to win benefits for farm workers... to change conditions in the fields, empower ourselves, work with others to bring peace and justice to American society. It was a very egalitarian, democratic ideology at the base of the vision...

We Malcriados (among others) blamed Leroy for introducing and promoting the "sacrificios" ideology, though in 1965, the Migrant Ministry folks had quite of bit of it too. And it certainly appealed to Cesar on more than one level. There was quite a bit of it on the March to Sacramento and in the Plan of Delano (our vision statement!), and of course it became dominant at the time of the first fast in 1968. I gather it appealed to many, many people in La Paz, especially Catholics but also romantics of all stripes, "giving my life for others..." How could one possibly be against that?

Well, first of all, it didn't apply to me, I would be a hypocrite if I said my main motivation was "to sacrifice for others." I was out for the benefits that a union contract would give me when I returned to farm labor, and in the mean time I wanted to use my time for maximum personal satisfaction as well as service to the cause.

But I thought it was also an unhealthy ideology in separating the staff ("we who are sacrificing for YOU!") from the members ("you ungrateful souls!"). Rather than brothers and sisters, morally equal, there were the selfless staff sacrificers and the greedy selfish workers. Hope Lopez has a comment from Cesar from about 1970, when the first contracts were signed, and CC warning that there would be folks showing up who had never done anything to help us, had broken strikes and bad mouthed the union, but now that the feast was served, wanted to sit down with the rest of us to the dinner.... and of course we had to welcome them (and start using the benefits to organize them). And in those days, there were so many grateful workers, who cared about the ex-scabs.....

But when Freedman workers complained about the delays in getting insurance checks from La Paz in the 1970's, we were urged patience, sacrificios.... hey, that's bullshit, these are benefits we earned. The workers' "sacrificios" are out under the 110 degree sun, putting food on your tables....

So, Abby, if you want to be mad about someone criticizing Manuel Chavez, I'm the one to blame. But I wasn't criticizing him about rejecting the "sacrificios" ideology. I agreed with him on that one...

Viva la Causa,

Doug Adair, El Malcriado, 1965-1970

Richard Ybarra, 9/1/04

RE: Ukegawa Brothers – "Rancho de los diablos"

Chris,

Get ahold of Minnie Ybarra...she might still remember or have information on what went down there. She knew or organized about ever worker there when she ran the service center there starting in 1972 and later ran the Proyecto's in Tijuana and Mexicali as well as working on many election campaigns in SD and the central valley. Hijole, que mujer!

Richard Y de L/H

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/1/04

RE: JUSTICE – TWO WORLDS

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Chris Schneider's posting about the still pending unfair labor practices of 1975 against Ukegawa Brothers in San Diego set me thinking about the rule of law:

In the world of philosophical principles and ideals, meting out justice is timeless and has no barriers, and on some unforeseeable day, justice will prevail. But in the real world of living, loving, working and dying, justice postponed is justice denied.

Linda LeGerrette, 9/1/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Kathy

I have not replied to any of the emails and have read only a few. I read yours though re Lupe and his second retirement and ask if you would please give Lupe my love and my best regards. Carlos and I have seen him in La Paz over the last few years and we have always enjoyed our time with him.

I reminded Lupe of the time he made me cry when I was the "mayor " of La Paz and in charge of the grounds and buildings. It was freezing cold and raining. The water had frozen in the pipes hence no running water for the residents and Lupe gave me hell for not having had the pipes wrapped with burlap to prevent the freezing. Shit, I was from sunny southern California and had never spent a day or night anywhere that was as cold as La Paz could get. Anyway, grumpy ol' Mike Kratko who I loved came to my rescue, taught me how to teach others to wrap the pipes, softened the hurt I felt from Lupe (which made me cry more). The great thing about having had that experience is that I saw a side of Mike Kratko that I'm not sure many others had the opportunity to see. And I earned my PHD in pipe wrapping.

I even think Lupe learned something from that experience. He was much more understanding in future "mayoral" type duties I continued to learn about.

My best to you

Con respecto

Linda LeGerrette

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 9/1/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Wow, Kathy, great post about Lupe... Please give him our congratulations on his retirement. He's really lived through it all. I hope there was some kind of party/ recognition at La Paz for all his years of service!

Your comadre,
Terry (Vasquez) Scott
1973-1988

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/1/04

RE: Manuel Chavez

Doug,

In my essay I spoke about the Cesar telling us that many would come after "el plato este servido" (after the plate is served). Many scabs were our neighbors, yes, friends, too. Even though it ate at us for a while we understood that we would have to accept them as "brothers and sisters". Yes, Doug, I know you are the one who mentioned "sacrificios". I always had trouble with that term although Cesar had a way of making it have meaning for me. However, it was normal to live the life I was living at home so what sacrifice was there in that? Moving on to work with the union, I saw it only as an extension of that life. What I understood from Cesar was that we would have to give until it hurts, until we could draw blood from a stone so to speak. What that meant to me was that when I felt like giving up or felt there was little I could contribute, that would be the

time to dig in my heels for another long haul because there was still a lot to do. Those were private moments of mine nothing to do with what others did or felt or that what I did was so extremely valuable or indispensable to the union. I remember Kathy Murguia stating in one of her postings something about David Martinez speech at La Paz after Cesar died that seemed to fall flat for her. Well, I recall listening to one of David's speeches there, too, after Cesar died and it was about "sacrifice". It came across as just a word nothing more. I am not saying that David did not sacrifice nor do I hold it against him for what he tried to express, only that some have a better way of explaining and convincing us until we get to a point in our heart that we want to drop what we are doing and join up for \$5 a week.

You mentioned a lot of different scenarios of sacrifice, but the one that comes strongly to mind for me was the sacrifice many made which was their families and marriage. That to me was the ultimate sacrifice for some because it was unexpected with many being caught off-guard. Who would have known joining a movement would have meant sacrificing what you held most dear? That to me was making the stone bleed after all. sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/1/04 (1)

RE: Manuel Chavez

Doug –

Perhaps the ones who made the most sacrifices were not you and I, and the other volunteers, but the workers who joined the strike

Donna Haber Kornberg (Delano, 1966-1968, London 1970-1974)

Susan Drake, 9/1/04

RE: Manuel Chavez

Amen, Sister! But I know Doug well enough to know his definition was probably "Anglo/middleclass/ volunteers" or a combo on those.

Susan

Roberto Bustos, 9/1/04

RE: Manuel Chavez

Everyone did something! some more than others, especially in the beginning. now it time to move on, and maybe do the second wave of el moviemento? gracias Roberto Bustos 1965-1972.

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/1/04 (2)

RE: Manuel Chavez

I'm sure that you are right, Susan, but my point is that 'sacrificios' did not divide us, "selfless staff sacrificers" from "the greedy selfish workers," even when the staff are defined as "Anglo/middleclass/ volunteers".

There were people in all groups (if one insists on dividing us into groups) who made sacrifices, great and small, for La Causa. I am happy to exclude Doug from this number, as he seems to so wish, but I do not think that he should extrapolate from his experience to that of everyone else's. I certainly observed individuals in all sections of the NFW making sacrifices.

In any case, in my experience nothing is so black-and-white. Those who made sacrifices (irrespective of skin colour or social class) probably also saw their participation in the NFW as very rewarding.

Best,

Donna

Alberto Escalante, 9/1/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Estimado Companeros Lupe y Kathy Murguia,

Para mi, unos de los mejor razones para ir a La Paz (despues que se puso como una Casa de Locos) era para ver y estar en proxima de las sonrisas y amistad de mis amigos Lupe Murguia, Mike Ybarra, Mario Vargas Y Ronnie (el Loco) de Santa Maria Y Sr. Panaduro (que descanse en paz) Y igualmente cuando encontraba Lupe afuera de La Paz tambien me subia ese mismo placer. Porque uno no podia ser triste en compania con Lupe Murguia tan grande era el gusto para la vida que compartia con todos con quien hablaba. Lupe, tambien te mando mis felicidades sobre tu retiro (Ojala que esta va ser la ultima vez!) Y todo lo mejor en la vida para usted y tu esposa Kathy. No se si Kathy se requerde de mi, porque nunca tuve la oportunidad ni el gusto de pasar tiempo hablando con ella, en persona. Lupe, ahora que estas retirado si tienes la oportunidad para venir a Oxnard para ir a la playa escribeme (email) antes de venir para darles mi numero de telefono y domicilio. Sabes que mi casa es tu casa y estamos nomas media milla de la playa. (Pasamos por un sendero, asi uno no tiene que pasar por el camino para llegar al mar! Es mucho mas tranquilo y seguro para los ninos)

Felicidades y Amistad, tu amigo

Alberto Escalante 1974-78/ 1985/87

Oxnard, DQU-Yolo/ Davis/ Sacto, La Paz, Sta. Maria, Calexico, Blythe, San Luis, Ariz. Calexico, Coachella, Avenal, Harbin-Lamont, Delano, Calexico, Oxnard/ Moorpark....

(Tambien estoy retirado en Port Hueneme, CA (Oxnard) Ya tengo 14 anos de sobriedad. Gracias a Dios. Porque con el todo es posible!)

Doug Adair, 9/1/04 (2)

RE: Sacrificios

In a message dated 9/1/04 . . . [Abby Flores Rivera] writes:

You mentioned a lot of different scenarios of sacrifice, but the one that comes strongly to mind for me was the sacrifice many made which was their families and marriage. That to me was the ultimate sacrifice for some because it was unexpected with many being caught off-guard. Who would have known joining a movement would have meant sacrificing what you held most dear? That to me was making the stone bleed after all. sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Dear Abby

You're absolutely right on that one. It's easy to be glib when you're a single 20-something free spirit...

Viva la Causa,

Doug Adair, El Malcriado, 1965-70

Hugo "Hawkeye" Tague, 9/1/04

RE: Random thoughts after spending far too much time reading UFW stuff

Scott Washburn: I was saddened to hear of your death and then very pleased to hear that the reports were greatly exaggerated. I think that it's great that you are working in a "swing state." If the Democratic Party had been smart, they would have hired former UFWers to coordinate voter registration and get-out-the-vote efforts in all of the swing states. Eliseo in Ohio, Marshall in Michigan, Meta in Pennsylvania, Mark Pitt in Florida, etc. starting in March. The election would be won for sure that way!

I was alarmed to see all of the truly wonderful people that I knew who have become lawyers! Dorothy Johnson, Barbara Macri, Aggie Rose, et al. Couldn't you have found more honorable professions like casket sales, used car sales, bounty hunters, etc. Just kidding, DJ.

Hey Doug, that's a weird nickname that you have "Pato" means something else to the Puerto Ricans around here. So much so that if you refer to somebody as "vato" and he thinks you are

saying "pato" - them's fightin' words. Por todos modos, I'm still gonna order lots of dates from pato the date man for friends at Christmas. I hope you have medjools. They are the closest thing to.....ah.. heaven.

The answer to the trivia question : How many wives showed up at Joe Moon's funeral ? 3. The legend lives on.

Hugh "Hawkeye" Tague

Susan Drake, 9/2/04

RE: UFW on History Detectives

UFW's banner from the 1966 March to Sacramento is the subject of History Detectives this coming week (beginning Sept. 6). Look for the day, time, and channel in your TV guide. This notice from the Labor Archives and Research Center at SF State University, delivered by historian Ann Loftis. I think Don Watson also works with that center.

Susan

Kate Colwell, 9/2/04

Kathy:

Congratulations to you and Lupe! What a life! So much craziness! I wonder what he'll do to rest? A little hard to imagine after so many years!

Terry:

Your story is so typical and so funny! Sometimes when I tell people about the Union years it sounds like something i made up.... That it part of why this listserve is precious. The memories and names are fun, but definitely hearing and telling stories that no one else could believe is part of our camaraderie..

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/3/04

RE: Los Borregueros Y Lupe/ Ukegawa

A post from Chris Schneider acknowledging my post re: Lupe reminded me that before he went south to Orange County for the NFWM, he worked with Chris on gathering information on the shepherders from Peru who passed through California, living isolated lives in small ten foot trailers with their flocks of sheep. The rancher would come to move the trailer when the grazing area no longer fed the sheep. They worked 24 hrs. a day for pittance. Lupe tracked them and gathered information for what I believe was a suit against the Department of Labor and the Ranchers.This is what Lupe was great at. Contacting workers and talking to them and gaining their confidence to take a risk. Linda, he was a grinch when he wasn't organizing.

It was up north that he had the accident where he shattered his hip and was transported by Chris to Delano where I went to pick him up. When I got him to a Doc., he referred him by ambulance to an orthopedic surgeon who wanted to operate and pin his hip bones. Lupe, being himself, said no. Doctor's advice then was to lay still for 6-8 weeks, which he did...with my help. His hip healed and he changed his gate a bit. Oh, we also had some special herbs and salves sent from Mexico by his Mom. There was something so frustrating about Lupe, but there was also something to be admired. That still scares me a bit. By the way, he still gets visits from some of the shepherders. One settled in Tehachapi.

Chris, when I worked for the Legal Department, I did an appellate brief on the Ukegawa Brothers. I'd be interested in the outcome.of the case and the make whole remedy.

Kathy Murguia 1965-1983

Joaquin Murguia, 9/3/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Mom,

I spoke to Dad the other day about his retirement. There was no big party, no gold watch, no cake or singing of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." But then, that's just not Dad's style.

I asked him what he intended to do and he said "I'll be helping the old people." This from a man who is 72 years young!

It is true that those that made the biggest sacrifices were the families. I remember being disappointed when Dad wasn't around for father/son night, Benito calling me daddy because I was the "adult" male in the house for extended periods, and knowing that the only time I was going to see Dad was when we went to bail him out of jail (1973).

This is the man that I am proud to call my father. A man who left everything he knew behind, yet cared enough to continue for more than 40 years to send his mom a check every single month. A man who with only a sixth grade education, educated so many and ended up with a California Supreme Court case that now bears his name, "The Murgia (sic) Motion."

It is hard to reconcile his sacrifice and dedication with the lack of loyalty shown by the Union to him over the years. From his "firing," to the treats of withholding his pension if he chose to pursue a worker's comp claim after his injury; thereby denying him the very benefits that he and others worked so tirelessly to obtain for farm workers.

This man, in his humility, looked beyond the politics and the personalities and rose above those who doubted and cast disparagement his way. In the end this will be a man whose legacy will be that he lived, he laughed, he loved, and made a difference in the lives of the many people who by good fortune came to know him.

I can only hope and aspire to be such a man.

I love you both,

Joaquin

Chris Schneider, 9/4/04

RE: The story of Lupe Murguia, a shepherd, a Peruvian Congress man and a reporter

Shortly after Lupe Murguia left La Paz in 1990 I arranged with Sr. Pat, then director of the the NFWM to have Lupe assigned to work with me at CRLA in Delano. I was running a campaign expose the exploitation of shepherders, mostly Peruvian by the ranchers and the complete complicity of state and federal officials who, supposedly, protect workers rights. Jose Cabada, then a free lance writer for several Peruvian newspapers, had stories published on the front pages of daily newspapers in Lima, Peru. His reports resulted in the Peruvian Congress sending a delegation to Delano to investigate. Jose Cabada, was one of the reporters that went with them. I asked Lupe to take the delegation to visit some sheep camps.

One of the most memorable incidents of the campaign occurred during one of the visits. Last night I wrote to Jose Cabada about Lupe's retirement and asked Jose to put the story in his own words. My apologies to the non-Spanish speakers, but this is a story that would get lost in translation. Here is the story as told by Jose Cabada in his letter to me:

Estabamos visitando a los pastores ovejeros con el congresista Guillermo Yoshikawa

Uno de ellos le preguntó al congresista de dónde era, y le contestó que era de Lima, Capital del Perú.

El pastor ovejero me quedó mirando y me preguntó: "Y tu de dónde eres"

Y yo le contesté: "Del Callao", Primer Puerto de la República del Perú, dónde somos conocidos como gente que no es cobarde y es muy astuta.

El pastor ovejero me contestó: "Ah, eres un pendejo".

El congresista y yo nos comenzamos a reír por la respuesta que para nosotros era muy graciosa y por la inmediata reacción del pastor ovejero.

Y allí es cuando le dije a Lupe: Tu eres un pendejo... a modo de broma, porque yo sabía que no era una ofensa, como lo interpretan los mexicanos.

Pero viendo el gesto facial de Lupe, inmediatamente tuve que aclarar porque le dije que era un pendejo.

En mi tierra, en el Perú, pendejo es todo lo contrario al significado que le dan en México que es ofensivo, insultativo. Se lo dije a Lupe con su más y su menos para hacerle una broma, ya que todos nos estábamos riendo.

Lupe se quedó más tranquilo y entendió que era una broma y no una ofensa.

De paso, dale a Lupe mis saludos. Siempre lo recuerdo, con estimación y agradecimiento por todo lo que hizo por nuestra gente.

Y ya no le digo que es un pendejo...le digo que es un Charro cabal, a todo dar como dicen los mexicanos. Personas como él no se conocen así no mas. Es una persona integra, muy humana y hace quedar muy bien a esa tierra que es hermana del Perú y nos une nuestras culturas milenaria...

Lupe es un embajador de México en los Estados Unidos. Un abrazo para él.

Chris:

Me alegra que aún recuerdes esa anécdota, porque para mí es una de las más grandes que he tenido en mi vida, sobretodo el tono de voz y manera que tienen de hablar nuestra gente andina, con ese acento muy particular y para mí simpático.

Kathy Lynch Murguía, 9/4/04

RE: clarification

[Joaquin,] I talked to Dad about the situation with the Workmen's comp claim. I know we talked around the dinner table about it, and just wanted to clarify. The situation was that when he was injured up North he returned and when he told the MD he was injured while working, his billing was assigned to a disability claim. Because he was still getting his stipend from the NFWM, and medical bills were being paid by the medical insurance I had with the County, and most importantly Sister Pat had concerns re: NFWM's workmen's comp insurance, we decided to not file a claim and tried to clarify the situation with the injury. Lupe was working as a volunteer. It did translate into some discussion that his pension would be impacted, and Lupe wanted his pension secured.

One thing I learned in the Union, was that things were not what they seemed. There was magic in this, along with drama and risk. The civil rights song of "eyes on the prize," always had and still has deep meaning for me.

As apparent in Chris' story re: "Un Pendejo", when dealing with the nuances of language, culture and most interestingly in our work as organizers, with the institutional structures of government, goals having to do with survival were modified to accommodate a higher value. That's why we needed attorneys. Right, Chris?

I was touched by your story about Dad, and as I told you earlier you, as the son of your father, you are such a man. Love Mom

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/4/04

RE: Lupe Murguía

Joaquin –

I knew your mother and father, but not you. I just wanted to say: what a lovely tribute to your father, beautifully written because obviously coming from the heart.

Donna Haber Kornberg (Delano, 1966-68, London, 1970-1974)

Alberto Escalante, 9/4/04

RE: Peruvian Pendejo vs A Mexican Pendejo...

Sister Kathy Murguia and son Brother Joaquin....and the list,

Chris Schneider's use of the Peruvian newspaper reporter, Jose Cabada's literal account of what transpired when they were all working on trying to secure some upgrades in the pay and working conditions of the Shepherders was really quite interesting. Especially the "Pendejo" part. Knowing how intensely honorable a man Lupe is, and while never, ever a braggart nor a person who would ever knowingly let ego or false pride interfere with his daily interactions, such as making each day a little better than he found it! He is a truly great people person. But, I can only imagine how tense the situation must have been or become when the reporter in jest commented..." (Y all? es cuando) le dije a Lupe: Tu eres un pendejo.." (or "...(.And then is when) I told Lupe: You are a pendejo..") In my mind's eye I can see at about that moment, an image of Lupe slowly turning his head to face the person who'd just called him a word that in Mexican Spanish (Mexican Spanish) means a loud or stupid person. Neither which would or could ever apply to Lupe Murguia. But like I was trying to put into words earlier I can see a vision of Lupe's face going from a full smile to a look so intense, as he pushed back that stubborn lock of hair of his, back off of his forehead and face. Whew! I can only imagine the intensity of that moment. The air must have been as thick as that famous Anderson's Split Pea soup (and that's thick!) at that point. Because, correct me if I'm off base here, Kathy. But Lupe's whole manner of being and dealing with people, be they the poorest homeless person, or a farmworker or un "ranchero rico" (or a rich rancher) Cesar or the President of the United States; In Lupe's world you respect the person who you're dealing with, and they, in return, will (or should) respect you as well! It's the simple, elementary Golden Rule principal of, "Do unto others" Except in this case the reporter had spoken without taking into consideration the variables which Kathy so succinctly termed "the nuances of language". As he was probably quick to learn the full meaning of the term..."If looks could kill!" Luckily it was Lupe who he was dealing with and not somebody like el "Calacas"!!! Because Lupe always gave the person who he was talking to the full benefit of doubt in every instance. But personally if I had been there I would have been diving for the floor about the same time as the word "Pendejo" had been uttered... I can only imagine the utter verbal chaos that must take place in say, The United Nations! So, as I requested in my last letter to you, Kathy please excuse any "Pochoisms" or other slips or oops! that I'm constantly guilty of! Either in my speech or writing. It's just that situations like the one that Chris related Just show so clearly what a real Man Lupe is, as the reporter related to later on in his story: "Y ya no le digo que es un pendejo...le digo que es un Charro cabal, a todo dar, como dicen los mexicanos. Personas como él no se conocen así no mas. Es una persona integra, muy humana y hace quedar muy bien a esa tierra que es hermana del Perú y nos une nuestras culturas milenaria... Lupe es un embajador de México en los Estados Unidos." Which basically put meant that he no longer would he call Lupe a pendejo for Lupe was an upright and honest gentleman (Charro cabal) in the complete sense of the word...A Todo Dar, like the Mexicans say.... como dicen los mexicanos. There aren't that many people like him anymore. He is a honest upright person very humane and he makes it easy to like Peru Sister, Mexico and it's people. Lupe is an Ambassador of Mexico here in the United States" Whew! Now, that's pretty heavy!!

And Joaquin, as you know you do have a really lovely family, for all of the suffering and separation that transpired the family remained intact! Not so in the majority of other UFW "unions" or marriages...I'm sad to say! But, "Eye on the Prize" as Kathy again so aptly put it....

Con saludos de,

Alberto Escalante

Susan Drake, 9/4/04

RE: Los Borregueros Y Lupe/ Ukegawa

[Kathy Murguia] wrote:

A post from Chris Schneider acknowledging my post re: Lupe reminded me that before he went south to Orange County for the NFWM, he worked with Chris on gathering information on the shepherders from Peru who passed through California

Jim and I drove up to find the shepherd, can't remember what time of year. It was one of the scariest drives of my lifetime. Road full of potholes. I don't remember if we even stopped to talk with the shepherd once we came across him in the middle of nowhere. My recall is that he was fair-skinned and Anglo, but maybe fair-skinned and Peruvian and maybe our Spanish was so poor that Jim didn't stop long enough with him to remember. The boys were little and sleepy in the back seat since it was early evening and we wanted to get onto better roads before dark. Later found out that friends of my parents owned the land--whatever that big corporation was that swallowed up hundreds of acres around there.

Susan Drake (1962-1970, La Paz, Delano, bunch of boycott cities)

Rick Longinotti, 9/6/04

RE: sacrifice ethic

Recent reflections on the *sacrificio* ethic inspire me to include comments from my essay:

Drinking Brown Water for La Causa . . .

by Rick Longinotti, boycott supporter 1972-75; staff 1975-6

It is difficult for young people today to imagine the sense of purpose that inspired my generation of youth who were involved with the UFW. Our conviction that we were changing the world was exhilarating. That feeling of being a part of making history so filled me up that developing a career seemed irrelevant. The Woody Guthrie refrain, "I'm sticking to the union...till the day I die", just about summed up my sentiments.

La Causa was the highest priority--more important than our personal needs. I found this a refreshing alternative to the individualism of our culture--where personal security and comfort seemed to be the highest goal, even if other values were professed. Up until then my main purpose was to prepare for my future--to become a self-supporting member of society. With the UFW, my life counted for something beyond myself.

The every-waking-hour dedication of the staff reinforced a belief I had that results come from hard work. My father's work ethic and my own relentless pursuit of success in the workaholic sport of swimming had contributed to my outlook. This belief provided a way to feel powerful in a world whose scale dwarfed the individual. If the main ingredient of social change was hard work, then can-do!. While a college student working to defeat the grower-sponsored Propostion 22, I noticed with a judgmental eye that another progressive campaign with lesser work habits went down to defeat, while the UFW won. It was proof, I thought, that dedication pays off.

There was a down side to this devotion to La Causa. For along with a belief in hard work went the notion of sacrificing one's own needs. This ethic was familiar to me as a Catholic. In parochial school I learned that, "a sacrifice isn't a sacrifice, unless it's a sacrifice". In other words, in order to merit from making a sacrifice, it has to hurt--no pain, no gain. This belief derived from what I believe is a misunderstanding of the example of the suffering of Jesus: suffering is seen as having a redemptive value in itself. Suffering becomes something sought after, rather than something undesired ("Let this cup pass" was how Jesus felt about it) that occasionally is a consequence for living with integrity. The difference in these views of suffering became clear to our boycott staff in the incident of the brown tap water.

One day at the "Boycott House", the former St. Paul's Convent at 29th and Church St. in San Francisco, the water from the tap turned brown. The water source was a well (maybe the last well in San Francisco?). As my colleagues and I expressed our disgust, our young supervisor responded, "What are you whining about? The farm workers have to drink brown water--and

worse." What did he mean? That we should drink the water without complaining? This became our private joke--that we should drink brown water for La Causa.

The incident was symbolic of the various ways an ethic of sacrifice was promoted among the staff. We picketed supermarkets long after our legs and backs told us to go home. And if we thought we were hard workers, we had only to visit La Paz, the union headquarters, to see the dark circles under the eyes of the people who never took a day off. I was torn between a belief that it was these extra things that people pushed themselves (and each other) to do that would make a difference, and resistance to the pressure.

The problem with the work/sacrifice ethic is that it doesn't accomplish what we think it does. There is no precise way to measure what causes social change, but it seems to me that the successes of the UFW had more to do with the strategy of communicating the problems of farmworkers to the public. This connection was weakened by an ethic which caused staff members to deny our own needs. People who suppress their needs are not happy communicators.

The denial of personal needs was promoted through moralizing. When a young campaigner for Proposition 14 asked his superior when he would be able to do his laundry, the response was, "We're in the middle of a campaign for the life of the Union and you're worried about your laundry."

The sad irony is that no one needed to rely on moralistic appeals to win our energies and enthusiasm. We had bushels of enthusiasm. The appeals to duty to the farmworkers had the opposite of the intended effect. They may have eked out another hour on the picket line, but they contributed to burnout. Working for the UFW was enjoyable because of the camaraderie and the purposefulness of making a contribution. We were quite willing to work hard and put up with hardships that inevitably arose. When you enjoy what you are doing, "work" is not drudgery. May the next movement avoid the martyr tendency by realizing that work can be play. The infectious enthusiasm of such a movement will be irresistible.

Abby Rivera, 9/6/04

RE: sacrifice ethic

Dear Rick,

I often think I should have had more fun when I worked for the union. I tried when I could because it helped clear the mind and revive the soul. I know we worked hard at La Paz, but when we partied, we let our hair down, too.

Your recollection about drinking brown water made me smile. I'm glad I never had to drink brown water when I worked in the fields. I would have died of heat stroke first. Someone was really feeling for farm workers with that one, bless his/her soul. The brown water episode brought back a memory for me. We had a rule in our house that we never shared our drinking or eating utensils. My father was strict about it telling us that germs were spread that way, etc. My mom used to boil everything, even our clothes when she washed because she feared tuberculosis. One of my earliest memories of working in the fields was when all of us took a break to drink water and we all had to drink from a large bucket sharing the same ladle. I looked at my dad for help and he just lowered his head, embarrassed. Somehow I knew not to say anything out loud. I gagged after I drank the water. From that day forward, my father would bring mason jars of water that we dragged along with us as we moved from tree to tree. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Alberto Escalante, 9/7/04

RE: The act of Self Sacrifice

About Sacrifice...about Cesars ultimate sacrifice,

Although the morning of April 23rd, 1993 started off like any other day, by that evening it would turn out to be one of the most melancholy days of my life. Because on that day if all my indications prove true Cesar Chavez achieved Moksha or the release from the constant cycle of birth-Life-death-birth-life-death here on earth. I believe this because Cesar's final life death cycle

was one of near sainthood. In fact, once a couple of generations of Catholics have come and gone I'm positive his name will be offered for canonization or Sainthood, much like Sister Teresa. In the days following Cesar's death, my heart was filled with recollections of things that he'd said when I had been lucky enough to have been close enough to hear his voice. Or things that he and I had actually talked about. At the time some of the things he had said to me I had foolishly discounted. Instead of listening to what he was trying to tell me, I had only heard what I wanted to hear, I should've been a better student!....The drive to the service in Delano was a panorama of remembering the times when I'd been here or there, or had almost been sent to this or that place. My mother who was 82 yrs. of age also wanted to go to the service (The next day she would march the entire way from Delano to 40 acres to honor the memory of Cesar Chavez.) We arrived about 3:00pm and I was amazed at the huge crowds that had already gathered. We parked on the side of the entrance road to 40 acres that's off of Garces Hwy. Again memories flooded my mind and heart. So many things had taken place there Juntas, Misas, Strike votes, parties, fiestas, organizing campaigns, Nagi Daifullahs funeral procession, and now paying the ultimate sacrifice for the fast that he had gone on in February and March of 1968 finally ending it after 25 days on March 10, 1968. At the end of the fast Jim Drake read a statement Cesar had prepared earlier, knowing that he'd be too weak to read it (the statement) by himself. Those words which I'm sure everyone knows went like this "I am convinced that the truest act of courage, the strongest act of manliness is to sacrifice ourselves for others in a truly non-violent struggle for justice. To be a man is to suffer for others. God help us to be men!" And now barely 25 years and a month or so later I'm standing there looking down at the body of a man who in death somehow looked much smaller than I remembered him to be in life."Oh, My God, Cesar, is this what it's all about?" I asked him silently. Richard who had been standing by the casket he'd made for his brother stepped up to me. I hugged him and his daughter Susie who was there by her fathers side. "Richard, I never imagined that he was going to die! I thought that he was going to outlive us all! Why did he have to work so hard? Why did he have to die so soon?" Richard looked so sad, I can only imagine how he felt, having lost a brother that he had loved so much! I think like all of us he was still in shock, too.

I still miss him...

Alberto Escalante

Glenn Rothner, 9/7/04

RE: Sacrifice Ethic

Rick Longinotti's piece on sacrifice and the work ethic reminded me of a memo I had written to Jerry Cohen, at Jerry's request, in September 1977. Jerry had asked all of us to list our cases, carefully assess our work, and offer an opinion concerning what should be done. I got carried away with the assessment and opinion, bemoaning the lack of any clear direction from the Executive Board in terms of priorities and suggesting that we would all be more productive if we were paid salaries and given some time off. A couple of excerpts (the ramblings of a 26-year old) follow:

"Generally speaking, I think we would all do better work if we had limited, definable and attainable goals. I know that the quality of my own work would improve. I also think that we would be able to accomplish more if we could hold onto our trained paralegals. It seems as though we lose them just at the point where they become highly skilled. To accomplish this I suggest giving them more time off, paying them salaries, and treating them with respect. I suggest that the lawyers take more time off also. I need a vacation

"I think that both the Union and the Legal Dept. have to stop trying to do everything all at once. We have to rid ourselves of the illusion that we can be organizing, negotiating, and administering in all areas of the state at once. This illusion has led us to do much work, but none of it very well

"You know, the other day I had to go to Lamont so I stopped at the bookstore in Valley Plaza to buy a couple of Ross McDonald mysteries. I kept looking at my watch feeling

guilty that I was shopping at 3:30 in the afternoon and wondering how I would explain the fact that I had time to read mysteries if I ran into anyone from the Union. Well, I said fuck it and I even went into the Broadway to see if I could find a new pair of pants. To top it off, I walked down the mall to the See's candy store and bought one of those dark chocolate suckers that used to be two for a nickel and now cost eight cents each. The sucker tasted good but I made sure I finished it by the time I got to Lamont (I had to chew it rather than suck it). I also hid the mysteries in the back of my car so no one would ask me any questions. When I got to Lamont the first person I saw was Coert Bonthius, the legal worker. He called me outside to tell me he would be leaving the Union at the end of the month

"I guess I sound a little pessimistic at this point. I don't mean to. Overall, I don't think we are beyond hope. I do think that we are adrift I also think that we are reliant on the Executive Board to provide us with [direction]. I am hopeful that they will do so."

I left the Union a year later.

Glenn Rothner, Legal Department – Delano and Salinas; Summer of '74 and August 75 – August 78

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/7/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

GREETINGS FROM YOUR MODERATOR

Nick Jones (friend and colleague from early NFWA days) called me over the weekend with a special request.

He asked me to post his essay online to the discussion group because he would like to receive some feedback. (Nick's essay arrived after the "Rough Draft" CD edition of the essays had been made).

* * * *

All the best,

LeRoy (Chatfield)

Nick Jones, 9/7/04

Nick Jones 1966-1976

Some of the things I intend to write here will be controversial, especially for staff who left the UFW before the summer of 1976 - before the organization derailed.

I was working for Students For A Democratic Society (SDS) in Chicago in the spring of 1966 when I read the recruitment ad from the NFWA inviting volunteers to come to Delano for work there. I stopped in my home town (Fargo, N.Dak.) long enough to file conscientious objector papers with my local draft board (I had been drafted) and left for Delano in early June, 1966.

The next ten years were some of the most positive and rewarding years of my life. I was fortunate to work those years with mostly principled, dedicated and talented people in several cities coast to coast and in California. I am grateful for their friendship and for what they taught me. That includes both staff and hundreds of volunteers in the boycott committees.

As much as I would like to write several pages of "war stories" about those ten years, I believe that it is more important to look at the political issues which took the UFW from its position of enormous strength and sent it into a suicidal, organizational tail spin.

If we, who were present, don't face these issues honestly and write and talk about our experiences, much good will be lost from the struggle and sacrifice of tens of thousands of farmworkers and non farmworkers.

After working ten years for the union I was appointed as the national boycott director in early 1976. The boycott was strong, well organized and going very well. By late summer many boycott staff were then in California to work on the statewide proposition campaign. There were rumblings about the boycott staff taking too long to leave their cities and get to California for the prop campaign.

Either Cesar or I asked for a meeting in October. There he accused me of being a communist conspirator. This came completely out of nowhere. For ten years there had not been a hint of mistrust towards me because of my politics. In total shock, my wife at that time, Virginia Rodriguez and I resigned within days of my meeting with Cesar.

During this period it became clear that the union was interviewing boycott staff in order to clean out the leftists and "communists". UFW used Larry Tramutola over the next several months to shut down the boycott offices across the U.S. and Canada.

For years after Cesar told me that he thought I was leading a communist conspiracy inside of the union, I blamed the top leaders of UFW for failing to stand up and stop the purging of staff and the destruction of the union.

Today I know that we were all responsible for what took place. We are responsible for failing to build a democratic union - the democratic union we talked about in the thousands of meetings and media events as though it already existed. Many of us believed our own propaganda.

Some of us looked the other way when smaller numbers of staff were purged in earlier years for political reasons. It was easy for us to accept the union position that those staff were pushed out because they were lazy and had their own agendas. What some of us thought was loyalty and dedication to the union allowed us to put the finger on staff who were asking meaningful and critical questions about what the union was doing.

Was there a communist or left conspiracy inside of the UFW? Absolutely not. The years have proven that. In all of the books, articles and oral histories that have been written since 1976, not one points to the slightest bit of evidence of conspiracy or left organizing against the Union from within.

There was minor staff criticism of the UFW's position opposing the United Nation's resolution calling Zionism racist, and later the UFW's poorly thought out campaign to report undocumented strike breakers to the INS. This criticism was never organized to spread to different parts of the union, and as far as I know, was never publicized or given to the media.

There were always left fringe groups who were present outside of the union which thought they knew better than the union on what it should be doing. Those groups amounted to nothing and had no real impact upon the UFW.

Unfortunately, the only real disruption of the union came from its own well meaning leadership who did little to stop the purges because they thought 'there must be a conspiracy if Cesar says there is'.

Were boycott staff and other volunteers leftists? Yes. Certainly 50% or more of the hundreds of staff considered themselves left. We came from civil rights, religious, community and antiwar experiences with a general belief that we could change the world. The farmworkers movement was a great place for people with left perspectives to invest their time and energy. We loved the movement and the fight on behalf of farmworkers.

Many top leaders were later pushed out of the UFW by the same insane witch hunts and conspiracies that destroyed the boycott department in the fall of 1976. Only the red baiting was exchanged for other ridiculous charges. Philip Veracruz' Marshal Ganz, Jerry Cohen and Chris Hartmire were but a few pressured to leave the UFW in following years. Gilbert Padilla, Jim Drake and Eliseo Medina left also, probably due to the ongoing chaos within UFW.

Leroy Chatfield left the UFW in 1973 after working ten years as assistant to Cesar and point person on almost every important step the union took from 1963 to 1973. Among other important

work done by Chatfield was his work in the establishment of the union's National Farmworkers' Service Center.

Chatfield's departure, although voluntary, certainly had something to do with Cesar telling him the night before the statewide vote in 1972 he would have to take the "blame" for the proposition loss if it failed.

Eliseo's departure was tragic and a real blow to building a democratic structure within the UFW. For the first time in the union's existence, Eliseo led in establishing a stable, democratic ranch committee organization. This gave farmworker members a structure in the different corporate ranches for electing their leaders, addressing their grievances and connecting with the union's executive board.

The expulsions and resignations of Ganz, Cohen and Hartmire were also critical losses to the farmworkers union. As the organizing director, Ganz led in the union's mostly successful field organizing campaigns in the grape, wine and vegetable industries. His final "sin" was to stand with leaders in the vegetable companies in Salinas who were demanding democratic treatment from the UFW.

Cohen is recognized as a "legal genius" who ran the UFW's legal department for many years. The legal department's defensive and offensive legal strategies resulted in several major victories. Probably the most important legal campaign caused the Teamsters union to back out and abandon dozens of sweetheart contracts in the lettuce and vegetable industry. To the best of my knowledge, Cohen was run out because he wanted the UFW to consider better wages and benefits for legal staff.

Chris Hartmire was forced out with a phony, trumped up charge of knowing that one of his staff in accounting was stealing from the UFW without Chris turning him in. Everyone who knows Chris knows how outrageous that charge was. One of the key pillars of support over the years came from the churches. Chris was largely responsible for building and holding that support over twenty years.

I hope that all of the above leaders share their stories in this essay project. After all of these years, don't we owe the farmworkers an accurate record of what took place?

Beyond the damage done to the UFW by its purges and destruction of critical departments, some farmworker leaders were abused and blackballed for attempting to build their union organization in the fields.

If they decided to run for the executive board or ranch committees without Cesar's blessing, they were attacked and called enemies of the union. For more information about the impact upon union members and leaders, see Nation Magazine, July 26 - August 22, 1993 written by Frank Bardacke and responses from the UFW in Nation Magazine, November 22, 1993.

Would the thousands of UFW members have voted to shut down the national boycott if they would have had an educated vote on that question? I don't believe so.

In 1976 the UFW boycott department had about 300 full time staff in over thirty U.S. and Canadian cities. At least 100 of those staff had four or more years of full time boycott experience.

After all expenses for pay, housing, offices, cars & transportation for those staff, the boycott department was raising more money for the UFW than it was spending. Besides my personal knowledge of the money being raised in the boycott cities, the executive board records document that fact. The UFW boycott department could take on any large grower label and put extreme economic pressure on that grower within weeks. Also, many of those same staff could be pulled into political, field and strike organizing in California as the needs arose in the union.

In early 1976 the Dole Corporation was the last target of an effective boycott operation where hundreds of grocers took Dole products off of their shelves over two or three months. At that time probably 50 of UFW's boycott staff had the individual skill and experience to go to any large city and put together an effective boycott in a matter of a few months.

Even if one were to support the union's position that it was time to return to organizing the workers for strikes in the fields, why would any union give up such a strong tool as the boycott - a tool that was paying for itself? I believe that that was a purely political decision.

To this day, there continue to be hundreds of union contracts that could not be negotiated or renegotiated by UFW because the union just didn't have the power to force the growers to bargain in good faith. When the Teamsters finally abandoned their sweetheart contracts, the UFW was too weak and disorganized to move in and organize those workers. The boycott was gone and hundreds of talented staff were gone.

Many other things were going wrong for the UFW in this period. Soon after the 1976 - 1977 staff purges, UFW headquarters began what they called "the game". This was an insane organizational, loyalty tool that would pull all of the staff together in an auditorium once a week and pick out individual "assholes" for group criticism and attacks. Assholes was the preferred name of targets in the games. This so called "innocent psychodrama" often led to staff being driven from the union in disgust or traumatized.

Where did the game come from? Synanon - the people who put a rattlesnake in their attorney's mailbox in an effort to stop his public criticism of that organization. In order to understand the type of crap going on at UFW headquarters, look up Fred Hirsch's essay about how his daughter Liza Hirsh Medina was treated after years of dedicated service.

As though the internal organizational mess was not enough, Cesar took things public with his trip to the Philippines where he was wined and dined by the marshal law dictator, Marcos. Internationally and nationally, Marcos was looked upon as a murderer of Filipino religious people, union leaders, farm workers and students.

In recent years I got to know a wonderful school teacher from the Philippines whose priest brother was kidnapped by the Marcos military and never found again. You can imagine the personal heartbreak for the family of the priest. This kind of terrorism happened to countless other families during the Marcos dictatorship.

Many of the UFW Filipino leaders and members and other non Filipino UFW staff were opposed to any visit to Marcos by Cesar. I am told that UFW Vice President Philip Veracruz attempted to persuade Cesar not to go. Check out Philip's book on his life / union experiences, edited by Cherlan and Villanueva, UCLA Press. Philip had great integrity and was known to often challenge many of the positions and decisions of UFW.

Hundreds of U.S. church leaders entered the debate with heavy criticism of Cesar and the UFW. These of course were the same people who had contributed big money, staff and support for the UFW over the years. Cesar's response was basically 'we can take any position we want and any outside criticism of me or UFW is racist'.

Several of these church leaders had defended the union within their own church structures over the years, sometimes with the loss of their jobs. They felt that Cesar would listen to them on the Marcos debate and see the error. He didn't.

I have some thoughts of why Cesar took the union off its mission and towards organizational disaster.

Cesar liked to find scapegoats for organizational failures. See Chatfield's and Cohen's essays and documents in this essay project. The accusation that the boycott department sent staff too slowly to the proposition campaign goes hand in hand with the conspiracy theory and provides an excuse for the failed 1976 proposition vote.

Although Cesar used plenty of left rhetoric and actually carried Mao's Little Red Book into George Meany's office in his camera bag when picking up the national AFL-CIO charter, Cesar was probably fearful of communists and the left. The CSO had some history of anti-communism and I have heard that Cesar had some earlier confrontations with Communists in his CSO organizing.

Certainly the AFL-CIO must have been putting pressure on the UFW to clean out the left after it affiliated. Look at the AFL-CIO's history to see what they did to many of their "left Unions." The United Auto Workers Union (UAW) was built with major support and staff with communist and left backgrounds. Following their historic successes in the car industry, the UAW moved the leftists out.

There are several unions that were destroyed or greatly handicapped by red baiting in the 1940's and 1950's. The AFL-CIO maintained offices in their D.C. headquarters through the 1980's which were connected to the CIA, and had the prime mission to work against union organizations in Africa, Central and South America, and Europe that were thought to be "communist or leftist".

Several peoples' / left organizations were infiltrated and sabotaged by the FBI during this period. I'm not a conspiracy nut but believe there probably was some anti-union work done within the UFW by the FBI. It was done to the Black Panthers, Dr. Martin Luther King's organizing and multiple peace organizations. Why not the UFW? There are stories floating around about police infiltration in the New Orleans and Chicago boycotts. I once heard that the FBI had visited La Paz to ask some questions about me. I never followed up on that to know if it was true.

UFW should do an extensive Freedom of Information inquiry with the government to see what we can learn about FBI infiltration and sabotage of the UFW.

According to Paul Henggeler from the University of Texas, the initial accusation of me leading a conspiracy came at Cesar's house following a meeting of department directors and officers of UFW in the board room in the summer of 1976.

Henggeler says that he has an executive board tape that details how I was the only person defending the El Malcriado editor, Joe Smith who Cesar had accused of deliberately sabotaging the recent articles in the union paper. Henggeler told me that Cesar said 'Jones never reports or criticizes the mainliners'. Thus, 'Jones must be leading or allowing the communists to operate within the UFW'.

More details on this will be published late this summer or fall (2004) in Henggeler's book. Henggeler told me that Joe Smith has died of cancer. I am proud to have recruited Joe to the UFW. He did great work for farmworkers and the UFW!

Do I have anything good to say about Cesar? Yes. I could fill a book with the good things about Cesar, but those books have been and are being written. Many of the essays for this project speak of the leadership, skills and nature of Cesar.

Again, one of the important problems that led to the disaster in the UFW was its lack of democracy for its thousands of union members. This is a systemic problem in most U.S. unions. The organization, with no democratic structure, allowed and encouraged Cesar to make many important decisions without effective criticism. When Cesar was right, things went well. When he was wrong, it led to chaos and wasted energies.

Clearly, there was much debate in the executive board meetings, but that doesn't equate to a democratic organization for the thousands of other farmworker members who had only a limited organizational voice or vote in the fields .

Some other thoughts:

Boycotts work. They can be a tremendous tool for unions, peace and community organizations. I hope that someone out there does some major work on the history and mechanics of boycotts. It is still an untapped power that has only now and then been used.

Think about the economic boycott against South Africa. It broke apartheid. The Montgomery bus boycott launched the civil rights revolution. Think about the threatened boycott of Idaho potatoes a couple of years ago when Idaho was going to pass an antiabortion bill. After several women's groups threatened to boycott, the state of Idaho killed that bill overnight.

How about a national boycott of Wal-Mart until they let their workers vote on union representation. If we could cut into Wal-Mart's profits by only 5%, a union would soon have

neutrality from the largest retailer in the world. How about a boycott of Fox News until they become an honest source of real news instead of right wing propaganda? A boycott of Chevron to bring down the price of gas? A travel boycott of Israel and the middle east until they establish a Palestinian state and stop the killing?

Like many, I am disappointed that the union did not reach its potential. The UFW was on its way to becoming a quarter million member union that would have had much greater impact upon farmworker's lives. It failed like many other unions.

Solidarity forever.

Chris Schneider, 9/7/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

Nick states in his essay:

UFW should do an extensive Freedom of Information inquiry with the government to see what we can learn about FBI infiltration and sabotage of the UFW.

For those who have not seen it, here are about 300+ pages of FBI files on the NFWA/ UFWOC/ UFW

<http://www.bvalphaserver.com/article7889.html>

I suspect there is more. A lot of the information here is blacked out. I admit that I have not read through all of these documents.

Benito Murguia, 9/7/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Many of you probably remember me as a wild little kid raising hell with my brothers, Kerry, Luke, Danny, Ricky, Kuda, and the other non Chavez kids in La Paz. Some of you I remember and others I don't I do apologize. I have great memories of my time in La Paz. Anytime I hear the saying it takes a village, I am instantly reminded of my childhood. Many of you were a positive influence in my life and left me with ideas and passions that burn inside me today. I can say that I envy all of you for what you have meant not only to me, but to history.

I want to thank all of you for your kind words about my father. I was very young during the time that many of these stories took place and it brings me great joy that my father is still the man now that he was then. He is true to his convictions and like you said always commands respect, by giving. My father is a man who was not afraid to stand up and speak his mind no matter the cost. A man who helped others without regard to his own safety. A man that knew the meaning of sacrifice. A man that understood the goal was bigger than himself. Even today when I call my father and speak to him about what he is doing now that he has retired, he now has even more time to continue helping people.

History is filled with stories of great men. What we don't hear are the stories of all of you who sacrificed to make those men great.

Again thank you and

"Viva Lupe Murguia y viva la causa!"

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/8/04

RE: Thanks for a job well done

To Benito, Joaquin, Kathy and all:

Reading the postings regarding the retirement of Lupe Murguia and Gilbert Rodriguez, I am moved by the time and energy both gave to "la causa." Both walked different paths contributing immensely in their individual way to make life a little more bearable and comfortable for farm workers. Whether they or the rest of the world realize it or not, they have been a true blessing

doing the work they did without thought for awards, certificates or even a “well-done” pat on the back in appreciation. Neither of them asked for them, or sought them from what I know of these two great caballeros. Their life’s work was to leave a legacy of justice for farm workers.

After reflecting on what has been said about each, I began to remember all the other good people, men and women, who retired throughout the years. First to come to mind were the Filipino brothers, some who lived at the Abgayani, others living throughout Delano and the outlying areas followed by memories of los mejicanos. They were our brothers and sisters working side-by-side with us in the movement doing routine or perhaps unpredictable work, the air noisy from the clatter the activity created by all their going and coming. Good days as well as disappointments but always with heels dug-in deep with determination. One day there they were picketing, answering phones, making leaflets, picket signs, cooking, doing maintenance work, repairing cars, driving people long distances to the large cities for one campaign or another, and the next, one by one, they were gone. Then we would find out that they were on Social Security, we knew what that meant. Back then, retirement to me seemed a strange word since farm workers usually worked until they died, were cared by others as in the case of the Filipino brothers or lived with a relatives where the money could be pooled to make life more affordable. In the early years, it was retirement as usual since they had no pension plan as others later did who worked under contract in later years. As strikers they at least had the ease of knowing that the union would give them a small death benefit which could go toward funeral expenses. Believe me, that was a real comfort to many.

It wasn’t easy for our retirees to say goodbye. It is understandable then why many would come and sit underneath the shady trees outside our offices and clinics or indoors in the waiting rooms to pass the time of day chatting, reading La Opinion, El Malcriado and learning the latest union news by merely being present as it unfolded in front of them. They would continue to faithfully attend Friday night meetings and to be useful when the need for an extra hand arose. They were real die-hards at picket lines or bus rides to Sacramento on whose help organizers could depend. In the union, retirements soon became a normal process probably taken for granted. Later, special recognitions and certificates were given at meetings or Conventions to our original strikers. Because some had already passed on to a better, just and perfect world they never got to hear our words of thanks for a job well done. However, like Lupe and Gilbert, I believe none had sought accolades of any kind for themselves.. For them, as with Lupe and Gilbert, it was the right thing to do, the right circumstances that allowed them to do it, and the right leadership they chose to follow and to trust. Their dedication was fueled by a determination to obtain a decent life for fellow farm workers and in their desire to be treated humanely, with integrity, and not as beasts of burden.

To all our recently retired brothers and sisters or those retired long ago, “gracias.”

Sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Richard Ybarra, 9/8/04

RE: Lupe Murguia

Benito...

You were and are a lot of things....including Lupe and Kathy's son...but I may be the only one here who had the pleasure of coaching you on our own "bad news bears" little league baseball team in Tehachapi....You were our best player....I remember talking to our assistant coach, Kim Pennington, when we both would say, "if only we could get him to stop at a base sometime, any base, once in awhile." You were a great athlete and a great non-stop, literally, competitor.... Barbara and J.R. will never forget the game that taught them and showed us all "the game ain't over til its over"....Behind 9 - 1 in the last inning we came back to tie the game in an inning where even Nefi (our mentally challenged kid) scored his first run of the season which made like a world series win for our team and our families....though they nudged us out in extra innings...we shared a great deal of satisfaction from learning what your dad and many others learned in life and through our experiences..about "never giving up".....

Richard Y.

Joaquin Murguia, 9/8/04

RE: Thanks for a job well done

Abby....

Thank you for your thoughts. It is easy to forget those who served before. It is one of the things I have enjoyed about the list serve, revisiting a part of life that seems to be all too distant in the past.

Your comments about the Filipino brothers brings to mind one brother in particular who always seemed to have a smile on his face and time for a nosey kid, Sebastian Sehaugen (sic). I didn't have the honor of knowing many of the Filipino brothers but I remember being fascinated by the stories that were shared.

Here's to all those who have gone before, living or deceased, active or retired.

Joaquin

Alberto Escalante, 9/8/04

RE: It was all about "Being There" (or... 24 hrs. in 1975)

To the List,

Marshall Ganz wrote back to comment on what I'd recollected. I'm glad that it brought back a little of "Los Tiempos Buenos" and regardless of his modesty concerning his great leadership and organizational skills, to me he was the absolute best, bar none! Plus, with Marshall I just seemed to hit it off from day one. It was like being in an accelerated learning program. The night before the Bruce Church Election I watched him sit in one spot for about 12 hrs and coordinate all the loose strings together, effectively reducing the Unknown votes to almost zero...none! Organizing was second nature to Marshall. That's when he was really in the "groove" I will forever remember his awesome ability to grasp the gist or nature of things way before anyone else. Thank you Marshall, for your friendship and always giving me enough rope with which to hang myself with and the faith that I wouldn't.

Saludos y amistad para siempre, tu hermano

Alberto

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/8/04

RE: It was all about "Being There" (or... 24 hrs. in 1975)

Hello Escalante: So that is how it happened. I had problems with my e-mail and missed this one. I learned quickly to bypass Cesar's office on my way to the Conference Room. I was always for entering from the other side of the Admin Bldg. I wasn't the only one who knew that trick. Otherwise, you never knew if you would get drafted for something (especially on a Saturday so there went your Sunday). sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp p.s By the way, nothing worked with Dolores; she was everywhere, like a spirit. It didn't matter if it was day or night with her. It was amazing how she always made it seem as though you were just the person she had been looking for. Or she would use a leading question such as, "Oh you know so and so or you've been to such and such a place?" After she hooked you in, how could you resist since she felt you were the only person the whole, wide world she thought could do the job. A true organizer that Dolores.

Ellen Eggers, 9/9/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

Thanks Nick for your contribution. I read it with interest. I was gone between 76 and 79, and when I returned to the Union, you were gone. I missed your presence and always wondered what happened. I am sorry about what took place, but was glad to finally hear it straight from the source. I agree with what you said about boycotts and using them today for political causes. I

already boycott Wal-Mart, as I suspect many of us do. But an organized effort would be great!
Ellen Eggers

Marshall Ganz, 9/9/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

Thanks to Nick for telling his story. I came to believe that my failure to challenge Cesar about Joe Smith, not to mention Nick and Virginia, was a moment of failure in a moral crisis. I apologized to Nick when I saw him in Chicago many, many years ago, but I know I owe him and Virginia a "public apology". As he recognized, those of us on the Board all had ways to rationalize why it didn't matter that much, that you had to break eggs to make omelets, and other forms of sophistry, mostly to avoid getting into a fight with Cesar, isolate ourselves, or just get on with the illusion that this would all go away so we should just get on with our work. I've tried to learn from this in the way I now try to live my life. Lutheran Pastor Martin Niemoller, a survivor of the horrors of his own country, said it all:

"In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up. "

Marshall

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/9/04 (1)

RE: Hello Nick!

You brought the past into the present with the suggestions on the Walmart boycott. I join with Ellen in saying, Right On. I recall with a lot of discomfort and confusion those days in La Paz. I enjoyed you and Virginia and the kids a great deal. I agree that things went on going back to the early days of the UFW regarding tactics on how to get rid of volunteers. I mentioned elsewhere about going to the office on Albany St. in Delano and coming across Donna Haber in tears, saying she had been asked to leave Delano. This was in 1967 or 68. The explanation as I heard it was that she was a communist. It became an easy way of getting rid of people who "some" felt were undesirable for whatever reason, and the reasons were varied; the biggest risk one ran was being critical of something the leadership said or did. It was a way of controlling the focus of what we were about. It was an issue that could have been worked out earlier by the leadership, because each of them in turn became the target of some accusation. It had become an adopted strategy of the few in hiding what? or protecting what? Was it truly the union? Then in the convention it became "workers". I knew Chayo Pelayo from Coachella. By that time it was an absurdity. Even today, there's a certain edge to recalling those events. Good to hear from you Nick. Like to hear from you more. Kathy Murguia 1965-1983

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 9/9/04

RE: Hello Nick!

I agree with Kathy. I would love to hear the stories that you haven't yet shared, Nick. Yes, for those of us who left earlier, these incidences have been hard to learn about. But I'm so glad that you contributed your story and am hungry for more.

Jackie Davis
1971-1974

Alberto Escalante, 9/9/04 (1)

RE: The Tragic Abuse of Nick and Virginia Jones

Sisters & Brothers,

I am such a coward!!...I waited until someone else opened the window re: The brutal betrayal of Nick & Virginia Jones. They were two of the most loyal, hard working & dedicated couples that the UFW ever had the good fortune to have had as volunteers. Which is the crux of the issue! If Cesar didn't want people "leaning" (mostly out sheer economic survival) towards the politics of the Marxist Socialism doctrine and the old "Gee, what if we, the workers of the world actually controlled not just the means of production...but also the equitable distribution of capital & goods as well. Oh, gosh wouldn't that be nice too NEVER have to worry about food, shelter, medical costs and transportation costs, all of those first of the month "worries and nightmares" Just as long as they were performing a service for the "State" Or the UFW or a workers collective or agricultural co-op. Cesar himself forced the issue of people talking about Marxist-Leninist "pie in the sky" because he didn't want to ease up on the \$5 a wk. "Sacred Cow" for non-farmworker volunteers. It was absolutely mandatory that a volunteer with a wife and kids apply for food stamps and Medi-Cal (in some cases even AFDC. GA for singles) If a person has nothing in the way of possessions or property, or money in the bank, well, that person is going to be talking about Socialism or political revolution. Anyone who thinks that a parent who sees his children and wife doing without the basics in life is going to a "happy camper" is wrong, wrong, wrong!! If Nick and Virginia were guilty of anything it was having to be poor and doing without a "normal" family life, so that they could help the person they loved almost like a father better manage the everyday affairs of the UFW Boycott which he and Virginia did. Probably better than anyone else could in similar circumstances. Nick and Virginia didn't do anything wrong, except maybe make their family do without so that they could maintain the UFW "Socialist Line" of \$5 per week and R&B Thank You Nick for all that you did over the 10 years that you were such an exemplary staff member! (p.s. Where did Cesar think we came from anyway? The Young Republicans or Wall Street? Chale ese, we were all Left wing radicals. Well, almost everyone, anyway. The Internationale was our "party music" back then...when we were saying "Viva La Revolucion!" "Arriba con Los Trabajadores!" "El Pueblo Unido Jamas sera Vencido!" Plus, a Red Flag & Black Eagle! Come on, Cesar knew .He wasn't born yesterday!! As they say!)

In Solidarity,

Alberto Escalante

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/9/04 (2)

RE: The Tragic Abuse of Nick and Virginia Jones

Alberto, WOW. That dear brother was a tribute to the revolutionary fervor that burned in all our hearts, and still does I would assume. Cesar used this fervor to get us to work for the \$5 a week, plus what we could get out of the government and then used it to betray our commitment. In the parlance of my work, this is a classic double bind. Makes people crazy in the long run. You really hit on something. En solidaridad hermano – Kathy Murguia

Roberto Bustos, 9/9/04

RE: The Tragic Abuse of Nick and Virginia Jones

Well here we go again! isn't cowardly that when the person is not around to defend themselves, they are bombarded from all directions? thinking that nobody is going to say nothing, shame on you! you are indeed a coward. I would have love to have seen you in the beginning, when Cesar and a lot of us were being jailed and beaten and no one around to defend us. And yes we too were getting the same \$5 per week, as you stated that the non-farmworkers were getting? why! because there was no money! remember we were an association not a union. did the volunteers then, expect to get paid! get real! people were let go because they broke the sacred rules of trying to run the farmworkers movement their way, and Cesar and the farmworkers would not stand for it. as I said many times before its over, move on, and we want to thank the truly volunteers and friends that came to the call of helping the farmworkers. ustedes sin son hombres y mujeres de hueso colorado. Viva Cesar Chavez Roberto Bustos 1965-1972 y todavia!

Alberto Escalante, 9/9/04 (2)

RE: Discretion is the better part of Valor

Hermano Bustos,

When I said that I was a coward for not immediately answering Nick Jones's letter, it was because I was worried that people like you would get me wrong. I too loved Cesar. And he also had a very special feeling for me. Porque mis Abuelitos Y los Padres de el eran amigos desde cuando vivian en Gila, AZ. Mis Abuelitos eran Indios Indigenos de aji en ese area de Yuma, AZ. Pero tanto como lo queria al Cesar como Lider, tambien se que hizo muchas cosas que al fin acabo con el Union. El Union ya no es como era antes. Ya tres veces hemos ganado luchas y al fin contratos con nuestra sangre, trabajo y sudor. Y tres veces hemos chingado no nomas el administrasion del los contratos pero peor de todo perdimos la confiansa de los mismo campesinos quien lucharon a nuestro lado por anos y anos. Hablando de todo eso sobre arrestos y golpeados tambien page mis cotas asi. Yo fui arestado varias veces, y no me sacaron porque me dijeron despues (no dijeron nada antes) que asi trabajaba el union, algo como que "ganamos mas puplicidad si nos detenean encarcelados!" Era la poliza del Union de no pagar para fianzas de los que fueron arestados. Bueno yo no me mori alli en el bote y todavia estoy aqui. Tambein los rancheros me machucadon dos veces con su camioneta (en dos areas diferentes una ves en Yolo, CA. Y tambien en Calexico, CA. Hasta escribieron de mi en la prensa Y lo reportaron en television. Mis papas estaban viendo el Walter Cronkite por el CBS nacional cuando salio el Sr Cronkie con "Earlier today, UFW Organizer Alberto Escalante was badly injured when he was allegedly run over by Woodland, Ca Farmer John Kimura. Witnesses say Mr. Kimura twice ran his pickup into Escalantes door as the UFW organizer was attempting to exit his vehicle, pinning the UFW Organizer in the cars door opening. Witnesses further state that after backing his truck up Kimura again drove his truck into the side of the UFW car. UFW sources said that Mr. Escalante was taken to a local hospital where he was examined and released after the Doctors finished examining him for more serious injuries. They were glad to report all of Escalantes injuries were confined to the soft tissue areas, and luckily he suffered no serious injuries nor broken bones as a result of the incident" Si pero ya despues de como 15 anos descubrieron que me frego la espina cuando me pego y ahora estoy discapacitado y tengo que cuidardarme cuando trato de levantar qualquier cosa. Hasta el Administracion del Seguro Social me examinaron y decubrieron que sufrí mucho dano a mi espina de esa vez cuando me m pego el Ranchero con su caminoneta. Y sabes que le hicieron al Ranchero, pues primero lo elijeron alcalde del pinche pueblo! Luego lo cargadon nomas con "manejando un vehiculo en una manera peligroso, lastimando a una persona (Yo!) Pero si lo multaron...Y gane WOW! \$2000 bollas, orale! Casi me hice Rico alli! Recuerdate que para nosotros trabajadores de volantud no habia Workers Comp. Yo tube que ir al condado para pagar la cuenta de el hospital...Otra cosa que no me dijeron cuando entre..Que eba que tener que pagar el hospital porque no tenemas seguridad tampoco! Todo lo que estabamos luchando para los Campesinos la Union no lo cubrea a nosotros organizadores. En los primer 4 anos que estaba con el union yo gaste de mi bolsa casi \$20, 000.00 (Americanos) Y perdi mi familia porque para mi esposa tener que ir a perder ayuda del Welfare no era como quiera vivir su vida ni mantener a sus hijos. Y yo no puede culpar la. Ella era Gabacha y los paps daya tenian una lecheria aqui en Oxnard..el Chase Bros Dairy. Para ella ayudando a los Campesinos no era tan importante como sabiendo que sus ninos (mis hijos, tambien!) tenian bastante para comer y una casa endonde vivir. Y si se enfermavan una manera para ir al doctor..Ningun lo que nos provea el Union. Si, para soltero era a todo dar. Pero para uno como yo casado con dos hijos menos de 6 anos de edad, pues.... Pero, todavia yo segue co mi sueno de un dia poder dicer Yo estaba alli cuando El Union de Campesinos se subio a pie, y para milles de Campesinos se mejoro la vida de ellos. Pero al final nada asi vino hacer acabo. Y alli queda la triestesa que siento. Todo el sufriamiento, todo los anos perdidos para que? Al fin nada!

Como siempre Luchando para los derechos humanos para todos,

Alberto Escalante

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/9/04 (3)

RE: The Tragic Abuse of Nick and Virginia Jones

Roberto, Roberto so much of what Alberto is responding to happened when you had moved on and left the farmworkers for what I would guess were your own personal reasons. Even when you worked with La Huelga things were not black and white when it came to leadership decisions. It was an issue of power, Choices were made; some good, others questionable. It did impact both the volunteers and the farmworkers. Many moved on others were asked to leave. I stuck because my choice involved Lupe and my family, and I tried my best to understand some fairly questionable decisions. You are right that it is time to move on, but there are some things to look at for future work in organizing at a grass roots level. I understand your passion and commitment regarding a desire to see things from your perspective of intense loyalty. I would encourage you to listen to some of the voices that were truly injured in what was overall a great moment in history! They need to be heard along with all the wonderful memories we all have of our work. It wasn't about volunteer vs farmworker. It is about what happened to us in the movement, nor is this about Cesar as a man being unable to defend himself. It's about the legacy of what we accomplished, and the honesty to look at what could have been addressed to have better succeeded.

Sin mas – Con respecto. Kathy Murguia 1965-1983

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/9/04

RE: We Qualified

Dear Alberto and All:

We all qualified for food stamps and medi-cal because of our "salary" range. When I attended school (higher ed.) nothing was free for me. I worked, i.e. work studies etc. Later, it was a regular job from 1-5 after a morning of classes.. Imagine my surprise at what I discovered while I was working hard and feeling good about my ability to survive in the world? Many of my university friends from rich families were on food stamps. Que a toda maquina, no? Yo fregandome alia solita porque sabia que no podia pedirle a mi familia 10 que no tenian y al contrario mandandoles con todo corazon 10 poquito que podia.

How did I feel about the whole food stamp, medi-cal thing as a volunteer? Like crap. My father always refused to get welfare for us and finally broke down to at least accept the free commodities only so we could survive winter until there was work. We had a choice. Like your wife, Alberto, anyone of us could have said, "Sorry, I am not going there with the food stamp or med-cal help." I could have done it, anyone could have done it. I guess when we took it we thought we were doing a number on Uncle Sam who owed us something? Well, we all know now who really footed the bill. We hear it at every election. The union nor anyone on its staff ever told me to apply. Someone started it at some point in time and everybody joined in including me. It was legal, it was available. Even though I was my father's daughter, who didn't own a pollo much less a vaca, I believed in the whole work ethic y tambien me daba verguenza andar de pediche; but, I applied anyway because I thought it would only be only for a while. Later, the union hired staff at salary with benefits but that came after us. Life moved a different direction. sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Alberto Escalante, 9/10/04

RE: In Summation....

Honored Folks on the Documentation List:

I was/ am very humbled and honored to be/ have been involved in such a wonderful movement as the Farmworker Struggle. My involvement, however minor and inconsequential it was or may have been was truly a blessing for me I learned so much and would like to express my thanks. So in order to do that I believe the following Lyrics do a pretty good job of summing up how I feel. All of those who know me know that I love them unconditionally as they have proven they also care about me in much the same manner. Out of all that I learned while a UFW Staff person I believe the most important things that I learned were humility & respect. The first person to as they say "Lower the Boom" on my head, was Dolores Huerta, who is obviously a pretty good judge of character. And able to spot a stupid, condescending, foolish patronizing jerk when she

sees one... Anyway somewhere into day one out at Farmworker U or The North Wing, she hears me saying some dumb things, one thing I'm pretty good at and she motioned for me to come over to where she was at. One thing to remember is that (1) I had a silly school boy crush on Dolores (Still do!) (2) I was so full of myself I thought "Oh Boy, Gee Whiz! She's probably going to tell me how wonderful I am. And how lucky the UFW is to have ME here, ready to take care of business!" When I get to where she was standing, she asks me my name, how I got there and who had set me. After I'd given her all of the pertinent information she asks me "Why did you want become a UFW Volunteer?" To which I replied almost before she'd finished her question! "I want to help the farm workers. I want to show them all I know!" Her face suddenly took on the patented Dolores half smile/half angry look as she gave it to me! BOOM! "What do you think you are some kind of social worker or something? Because if you do you're in the wrong place! Go down to the Kern County Social Services office and offer them your services! Because we don't need any people feeling sorry for the farm workers and telling them they want to "Help" them! Maybe, if you are one of the lucky ones who goes through this training & are chosen to participate in the UFW Organizing Campaign for Farm Worker Elections... Hopefully by then you will have learned one of the most important lessons of the many that the Campesinos are going to show you & that is..... Humility. Every once in a while I think about that day and how probably because she felt sorry for me, maybe it was the teacher in her reaching out to me, either way I want to thank her again, and tell her that I'm still learning all of the intricate details of being humble. So tho her and all of the thousands of people who've cared enough to offer me their friendship, love and advice I dedicate this song to you, where ever you may be.....

"Bird on a Wire"

Like a bird on the wire,
Like a drunk in a midnight choir
I have tried in my way to be free.
Like a worm on a hook,
Like a knight from some old fashioned book
I have saved all my ribbons for thee.
If I, if I have been unkind,
I hope that you can just let it go by.
If I, if I have been untrue
I hope you know it was never to you.

Like a baby, stillborn,
Like a beast with his horn
I have torn everyone who reached out for me.
But I swear by this song
And by all that I have done wrong
I will make it all up to thee.
I saw a beggar leaning on his wooden crutch,
He said to me, "you must not ask for so much."
And a pretty woman leaning in her darkened door,
She cried to me, "hey, why not ask for more?"

Oh like a bird on the wire,
Like a drunk in a midnight choid
I have tried in my way to be FREE.

By Leonard Cohen 1969

Agape, Philos and Eros.....
Alberto Escalante

Mary Mocine, 9/10/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

I did a FOIA request on Cesar as part of the Ducote break-in litigation and, as I recall, there were thousands of pages and we just couldn't afford to get them as they were not central to the case. I tried to get Jerry to pay for me to go to DC to look at them but he wouldn't do it. He was right, again because of the peripheral nature of the info but I was disappointed. Jerry Ducote broke into the DELano HQ in the late 60's and claimed he'd been put up to it by Pandol, the Farm Bureau and the FBI and the D'arrigo bros. He also broke into the Hirsch's home and Alinsky's home as well as Ramparts Magazine etc.

Mary Mocine

Maria Murguia Rawls, 9/11/04

RE: Thank You From Maria

From Maria Murguia Rawls

Mom

I am sending this to you and the family, but please share it with those who have said the many kind words about Dad. As I read your tribute to Dad's retirement, I had many feelings. I have always told people, the woman, wife and mother I am is a result of the love from you both, the rest of the family and my husband, Michael....thank you all!

But as I read your post Mom, I was troubled. I consider my father a truly great man, who, along with others worked to build the union and educate others about social justice. Together with other Latinos/(as), I have been given opportunities as a result of their work. I am proud to say he impacted the history of this country. Many of you probably remember me, along with my friends Corey, and Emmy as a trio of sassy, strong-minded and strong willed young girls. We were also a protective and protected bunch. My father taught me at a very young age how to hold my own and stand up for myself (although he did not condone me throwing a brick once in defense of my little brother).

As a kid, I watched the struggles of the families, the sacrifices they made and I learned early that life was not always fair. But everyday we gave thanks for our blessings as a family and kept faith in both people and in God. Also I did not understand a lot of the things that surrounded me. Why was there so much hate directed at us in school? What were the picket lines about at Town & Country in Tehachapi?. I knew about the boycott, but why was a member of the school board shopping and showing us the grapes he just bought. I knew my Dad was strong willed about his work. I figured this was just the way life was... and did not realize that what they and we were all doing had the potential for changing the social and economic landscape of not only California, but the entire country. I was watching history in the making.

I remember in high school, the first time I saw Cesar's name in a new edition of our history book. It seemed unreal, but very exciting. I remember looking for my Dad's name. It just made sense to me at the time. Funny thing about this is that when I look at the history books and literature, so many names of those who dedicated their lives to the Union are missing. I understand this volunteer project is to record their stories also.

My father dedicated the better part of his life to the union. In this, I cannot begin to describe the level of respect I have for him. Back in 1990, my parents did not share with me that my father had been escorted off the property in La Paz. I think back to that time in my life and tears come to my eyes. In 1989, when I contracted spinal meningitis, and had become comatose my father was at my side and his faith never wavered. He told the doctors I would not die, they did not know his daughter...I was too strong and too stubborn. After I left the ICU and was placed on a recovery ward, my father came everyday to help exercise my legs... I could not walk and he was helping me to rebuild the muscles so I could stand and walk on my own again. I remember him holding my hand as they stuck the 9 inch needle in my back and told me not to move as they did the spinal tap...he told me I was safe and it was ok. I remember being worried that he was missing work because I knew the Union was his life. But, I was so thankful he was there.

It's painful to think that a year after all this, he was fired, the reasons still a mystery. This is where the anger comes in. You see, I thought he changed jobs and began working with Chris Schneider. When I heard his story....bottom line, I was angry to see he had been so deeply hurt. He said it had to do with David Martinez. I know my father's soul... When I heard Babo had asked him to come back several years later, I was thankful. Babo, if you read this, thank you for making it right for my Dad.

My father has always said to remember where you come from and help others...I believe this is why I did not die that day. I believe I am on this earth to touch people's lives when possible. I often tell young people of color to have the confidence, and look for the financial means to be successful in this world, "If I can do it, so can you...let me help you and be an example for you." I would not be that example if it was not for my father, my mother, and many like them who taught us to believe in ourselves and sacrifice for others.

In my Dad's retirement, I know he will still work and do what he loves...working with others and helping out. To all the people who have been a part of this, thank you for the kind words you have given him and thanks to those of you who helped in raising my family and the rest of the children in La Paz. My respect to those who helped pave the way for us and the younger generations, and whose names, although not mentioned in the history books, are my generation's heroes.

Y a mi Papa, my Daddy, gracias por mi vida...Thank you for always blessing me and giving me the foundation with God in my life, thank you for teaching me respect, love, pride, humility, and what it means to be family...we have a great one. You and Mom did good! As I look at my son, I am so thankful for the lessons in my life that I can pass on to him. Que Viva La Paz; Que Viva la Union Y Viva Todos Que Busca Justicia.

Maria Murguia-Rawls

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/11/04

RE: Hello Nick!

Dear Kathy,

That is VERY interesting. As you say, I was asked to leave, by Cesar I thought, but it could have been by Jim Drake. I was not only very upset (I had abandoned my previous life to move to Delano and dedicate all my time to La Causa) but quite shocked; I could not understand why I was being expelled. I had worked hard, and done my best.

You say you heard the explanation that I was a communist. This was untrue. I considered myself a radical, and had taken part in many "causes" in Berkeley -- peace, anti-Vietnam war, Civil Rights, Free Speech, etc., but I never joined the Communist Party.

I think, however, that some FBI agent somewhere decided that I WAS in the Communist Party, as my name appeared in what was then the California State Un-American Activities Committee's (really, there was one) Report. But my name was under a picture of somebody else -- clearly a mistake, but it didn't occur to me to try to correct it.

Is it possible that Cesar, or somebody else in the union was getting information from the FBI? I am saddened that the McCarthyite mentality hurt not only people whose ordinary employers were frightened by the word 'communist', but had the same effect in a movement like the NFWA.

Further, why did Cesar ask me to work for the union again in 1970, if he was put off by thinking I was a 'communist.' Had McCarthyism fallen into its well-deserved disrepute by then?

Best,

Donna Haber Kornberg (Delano, 1966-1968, London, 1970-1974)

Richard Steven Street, 9/11/04

RE: FBI

Dear folks,

I wrote about the FBI and the UFW in an essay "The FBI's Secret File on César Chávez," Southern California Quarterly, 128 4 (Winter, 1996/97), 347-384. The file is about 1,700 pages. There are FBI files on everyone from Carey McWilliams to the Associated Farmers, back to the 1930s, including even photographers like Otto and Hansel Hagel and Dorothea Lange, and social scientist Paul S. Taylor. In one of the FBI files on Cesar Chavez and the UFW, an FBI agent actually questions what he is doing keeping tabs on a man who is so obviously loyal and inspiring. Oddly, through their gathering up of observations and clips along the way, the FBI acted as an observer and gatherer of data that is bizarrely useful in reconstructing history. There are also many illusions to an "inside" source that may or may not be accurate and I have never been able to figure out.

Richard Steven Street

Doug Adair, 9/11/04

RE: Reds under beds?

In a message dated 9/9/04 . . . [Roberto Bustos] writes:

we were an association not a union. did the volunteers then, expect to get paid! get real! people were let go because they broke the sacred rules of trying to run the farmworkers movement their way, and Cesar and the farmworkers would not stand for it. as I said many times before its over, move on,

Dear Roberto,

I certainly take a different view on this history than you do. We used to stress that we were an association, not a union, and implied that we were more like a family, a band of brothers and sisters, working together to bring justice to farm workers. When I hear of a long-gone brother like Nick Jones (Hi, Nick!) joining in, I am interested in his memories of his union service, what he's doing now, and yes, why he left.

When I read these beautiful tributes to Lupe Murguia, I can't help thinking, "What on earth was going on in La Paz to take the hatchet to such a dedicated brother like Lupe?" The hatchet man mentioned is David Martinez, who certainly is not dead, and I am sure would be welcomed to offer an explanation.

When I hear of the horror stories of what was done to my dear sister, Maria Rifo, after so many years of selfless service, I ask for an explanation. The hatchet man in that episode is mentioned as Frank Oritz, who I don't think is dead. Or his wife, Barbara, could offer history an explanation. Maria Rifo a Communist? Burn her at the stake! Presumably, Cesar made the final decision, but he must have been getting terrible advice from some of these people he relied on.

And as for the Communist excuse, where did that come from? In 1965, there seemed to be an open door to any and all, to come and help. I remember two people in those days, Luis Valdez and Ellie Risco, who had both been to Cuba. Were they Communists? Who cared if they were? (It was even rumored that Risco was a spy; he talked such a radical line, and was Cuban, but he always seemed to have money, a beautiful South American girlfriend with a gold Camaro and credit cards). And why, then, did you and Cesar and the others in the leadership meeting, planning the March to Sacramento, choose Luis Valdez to write the Plan de Delano, our Declaration of Independence? (and instead of saying, over and over, "it's over," I would love to hear your memories of that meeting and of the March, where you played such a key role).

We had two card carrying Reds at the David Freedman Company, Gus Swaby, an elderly Slavic farm worker who had been a member since the '30s or 40's; and Efrien Oviedo, a member of one of the Mexican Marxist parties. Were they good, loyal members of the union? Absolutely! We would have been furious if someone from La Paz had come down and told the Ranch Committee to fire them.

I think some of the pain expressed by Lupe's family, and Nick, Donna, and Lorraine and others, is that we were a family. And as a family, we were there for each other, sharing in that pain, consoling. And we are still there for each other. And as members of that family, every one on this

list remembers times with that huelga family, with La Causa, that were some of the most exhilarating, satisfying, rewarding experiences of their lives. No regrets...

Viva la Causa,

Doug Adair, El Malcriado, 1965-1970

David Freedman Co, 1978-89

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/11/04

RE: The awakening

Artists capture events when things are as they are;
they capture moments of clarity and truth.
their aesthetic appeal rests on the observer's desire,
presence and freedom to see.

thus the tear answered questions that for days were asked:
are you there? do you hear?
where have you gone my child?

The moment did not escape them.
They had come together to change shifts.
The mother, the night. the father the day.

And then in that moment, the tear; the answer to their question.
stating I HAVE SURVIVED.!

k. murguia 1989 (on the occasion of Maria's awakening from her coma)

Susan Drake, 9/11/04

RE: Reds under beds?

Pop psychologist here: I think Cesar was so sensitive to criticism and perceived disloyalty that even the slightest difference crushed him. Since I wasn't fired for being too radical, and I know I did hurt him deeply by criticizing him so publicly, I feel safe suggesting that those he fired had stung Cesar as a father is stung with a disagreeing child. Too bad we weren't all as cavalier about being fired as Dolores was!

Susan Drake (1962-1973)

Susan Drake, 9/12/04

RE: UFW memory book for sale

In 1982, Daneen Montoya and I put together a collection of about 50 tributes from senators (Kennedy, Mondale), celebrities (Stegner, Steinem), and UFW staff. We sold it at the San Jose 20th anniversary/reunion. It's about 80 pages of letters and photos, 8.5x11", paperback. I just came across the last 15 copies which you can buy for \$6 each, including shipping.

* * * *

Susan Drake (1962-1973)

Juanita Brown, 9/13/04

RE: NICK JONES 1966-1976

Thank you, Marshall, for your thoughtful and honest reply to Nick's story. I'm wondering if we shouldn't all be thinking about Pastor Niemoller's reflections in these days of the Patriot Act and other ways they are "coming for" (or "coming after") people they think are subversive--or who leaders imagine to be as it seems happened with Cesar in the 70's in UFW.

I think it's important to have these thoughtful conversations about all aspects of the farm worker experience....knowing that most of us would say (even with the pain) that those years were

incredibly formative. I, for one, was shaped by my time with UFW in ways large and small that I am reminded of most every day of my life--and for that I am deeply grateful.

Thank you to all who are struggling to make meaning of an important, and, for many not always easy, time in our lives.

And to the Murguia family--I just want to say how beautiful it has been to bear witness to the mutual love and respect you share. Kathy, por favor, da un gran abrazote a Lupe de mi parte!

Warmest regards,
Juanita Brown

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/13/04

RE: Reds Not Under the Bed

Nick,

In your essay you stated, *"There were always left fringe groups who were present outside the union who thought they knew better than the union on what it would be doing. Those groups amounted to nothing and had no real impact upon the UFW."*

Dale and Jan Van Pelt were in charge of the Seattle Boycott in 1973. Dale would hold regular meetings at the Cultural Center with some of us who lived in the campus area. We met to discuss boycott activity plans at the UW or throughout the city. The issue came up that various groups present were using the picket line time to distribute their flyers and newspapers, i.e. Marxist, Leninist, Maoist, Trotskyites, etc. Some present believed it was causing disruption and confusion that warranted discussion. I didn't know one group from another which was pretty obvious when I stated the name of one newspaper (Marxist) being distributed by a boycotter who was a Trotskyite. What did I know? I bravely defended and was supportive of Dale's plea that we needed to focus on the union's goals for the boycott. Of course, I caught hell for it, was told to shut up and everybody was shouting at once because I don't shut up easily. Somebody said that Cesar and the UFW was far off in California and didn't know what we needed nor should they be telling us all in Seattle how to run the boycott. What was my question? "Who is working for whom here?" Hell, I left madder than a nest of hornets to go get reinforcements; big mean Chicanos/nas. What a disappointment. That particular group of Chicanos had recently decided, unbeknownst to me, (gee, I wonder why?) that they undecided about working with Dale because of the way he was handling the use of farm workers from the Yakima Valley to help with the boycott. What I understood was that these supporters felt they were done much of the work of bringing and feeding the farm workers and Dale was getting all the credit for their efforts. That blew me away since we had a similar boycott strategy in California going back to the Grape Boycott and we all worked successfully and in solidarity for the cause. I had never heard nor even imagined their discontent now so it was a revelation to me. Anyway, I digress. I walked back without my reinforcements, but not matter. They were still there, the Reds, Commies, okay, those outside the Republican, Democrat box, but not under a bed, still at the Culture Center visible to all. It was decided, (because we fought like hell for this), that they would help us at our picket lines at Safeway (or any other place we picketed or demonstrated) but would not pass out their leaflets or newspapers until the picket line was over. Do you want to know why they agreed the plan? Not out of charity that is for sure. They agreed because all along their intention had been to give their materials to us only, the picketers, no the shoppers. We had thought they had been confusing the shoppers when all along they had been talking to us and getting in our way; it was difficult working that way. What they didn't know is that the word got around from some mysterious picketer that we accept their materials to keep them happy which we promptly dumped into the trash cans along University Avenue on the walk home. I disagree in this particular case with Nick that, "...they had no real impact on the UFW' It sure took a lot of time, energy, hard feelings and unnecessary arguing. We could have done without it because it was disruptive. Disruption can be a problem that keeps one from doing work at hand. In the case of holding back support when you can give it, the same applies. Multiply it throughout our boycott cities, what a mess. In Spanish, it is called, "chingando quedito". (Excuse my vulgarity; I am just trying to press my point.) sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Hugh “Hawkeye” Tague, 9/13/04

RE: Redbaiting

Redbaiting has always been wrong and stupid. Leftwingers contributed an awful lot to the UFW and the Labor Movement in general. The various weird groups were a pain-in-the-ass with their trying to leech off our boycott picketing, peace marches, etc. But they were not the ones who devoted their time and energy to building the farmworkers union.

I remember in late '76 when I was leaving the UFW after about 5 years, somebody accused me of being a "commie-type" because I had a girl friend whose brother was being rebaited out of the Union. I asked how that made me a "commie-type". She wasn't even my main girlfriend. I said that I had girlfriends that were nuns . Did that make me a Catholic? It just goes to show how silly this all can be.

When I was a "goono" (doing guard duty for Cesar when he was traveling in Florida or Ohio or wherever) and my job was to take a bullet for Cesar, he never asked me what my political affiliation was.

Hugh Hawkeye Tague 1971-1976 Atlanta – Florida – Cleveland - CA

Susan Drake, 9/13/04

RE: Redbaiting

Maybe I already told this story earlier: In NJ on the boycott, some church folks asked (1970-71) if I was a Communist. I said, truthfully (read "ignorantly" or "innocently"), "I don't know much about communism, but I'm a Christian. A lot of what Jesus stood for sounds a lot like communism to me." That shut 'em up.

Susan Drake (1962-1973)

Alberto Escalante, 9/13/04

RE: Liberation Theology 1A

On Sept. 13, 2004 . . . Sister Susana Drake wrote: *“I don't know much about communism, but I'm a Christian. A lot of what Jesus stood for sounds a lot like communism to me.”*

Hermanas y hermanos,

Exactly what Sister Drake expounded upon is the very thing that was the basis of the movement of the Liberation Theologists which began with the awareness that it is blasphemous to care for people's souls while ignoring their needs ... Cesar knew that if we would continue doing type of agrarian reform and caring for the needs of the oppressed and down trodden we were truly in step with the belief that the Christian Gospel demands “a preferential option for the poor,” and that the church should be involved in the struggle for economic and political justice in the contemporary world - particularly in the Third World. * * * *

* * * *

Alberto Escalante 1974-78/ 1985/87

Oxnard, DQU-Yolo/ Davis/ Sacto, La Paz, Sta. Maria, Calexico, Blythe, San Luis, Ariz.

Calexico, Coachella, Avenal, Harbin-Lamont, Delano, Calexico, Oxnard/ Moorpark.

(Now Retired and ruminating peacefully in Port Hueneme, CA 14 yrs. C&S)

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/14/04

RE: WHAT WE FAILED TO DO

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

I commend Marshall Ganz for posting a public apology to Nick and Virginia Jones. If we, as former farmworker volunteers, would take personal responsibility not only for what we did, but for what we failed to do, the farmworker documentation project would be more complete.

Carlos LeGerrette, 9/14/04

RE: Fast for Justice

This week, our Chavez Service Club coordinators are learning about Cesar's three major fasts. Cesar's speech ending the Fast for Non-Violence (1968) was read by Jim Drake. Cesar's 1988 Fast for Life speech was read by his son, Fernando Chavez. I don't recall who read Cesar's speech ending his 1972 Fast for Justice.

Can one of you enlightened souls on the listserve provide an answer. The first to answer will receive an official Chavez Service Club t-shirt.

Adelante,
Carlos

Roberto Bustos, 9/14/04

RE: Fast for Justice

If my memory serves me right, I believe it was Dolores Huerta! gracias.

Gary Brown, 9/14/04

RE: Reds Not Under the Bed

Interesting story from Abby about the REDS. I have another story. I was assigned to East San Diego which included San Diego State. We had obtained pretty good support for the Socialist Workers Party on campus. They often sent supporters to the picket lines, for the most part they left their leaflets at home and we did not have a problem with confusion over the leaflets. However, their support was resented by the Chicano Maosits on campus so when we turned our attention to the cafeteria at State, and the lettuce they used, it got to be a real distraction and threatened our progress while these two fought it out.

The Socialists had been good to me. They had invited me to speak at their convention and always had someone there at the picket lines I had established. Frankly, they were not a problem and I was grateful for their support but I felt torn between the two sides. I called LA for help on this and I got Fred Ross. He told me to tell them a pox on them both and wait and see who returns to the fold. So off I went. I told the Socialists that while I appreciated their help I could not have them on the picket lines if it caused decision and I wanted them to put their little battle to rest when it came to the UFW. If they could not then see ya! I then told the Chicanos the same thing though I do not think I spoke well. Nevertheless, in about a week I got each side to come around and say the most important think was the Union and they could put aside their differences. I think it was a bit of face saving on each side but I breathed easier.

I found it interesting that when you had the time you could get anyone to support the Union. I have had Jehovah Witnesses honor the picket line and even a professed Bircher. We had all kinds of supporters. Remember the Republicans hate Farmworkers campaign. There was some flack about the "hate" in that campaign. I was in La Paz at the time and Cesar addressed that a bit. He said he did not care where the support came from, even Republicans. I imagine he did care, but his point was that the Union looked everywhere.

All in all dealing with the Reds, the Chicanos, the Panthers, the right, the left, the wrong, comes with the territory for all organizers.

Gary Brown

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/15/04 (1)

RE: Cesar and the little Red Book

Hi Doug and All:

Doug, I believe it was you who stated that you observed Cesar carrying Mao's little Red Book. In 1966 we received a box full of the Little Red Book as part of our Christmas presents donations

from who knows whom. I was asked to help sort and unwrap Christmas presents (yes, unwrap) that would be distributed to the striker families. In all the mounds of toys I came across a cardboard box full of cute, little red books. They weren't for children so I put them aside. Before leaving I asked if I could have one of those books. Mind you, I loved the book because of its unusual size and color. When I got home I showed it to my dad who recognized it. He told me, "No adoran a Dios." ("They do not worship God.") He did not forbid me to read it, though. I added it to my meager collection of secondhand books and had an adventure looking up unfamiliar words in the dictionary. My father's words taught me a valuable lesson. You can read anything you want but it is good to know the line of departure from your own personal beliefs. Sinner though I be, I have always adhered to Psalms 127: 1. Therefore, reading that Red Book didn't make me a communist anymore than reading the Delano Record or Bakersfield Californian make me a Republican. By the way, those little red books a few days later created quite a stir, and I remember people obtaining their own copies. Perhaps that is why Cesar happened to have one, too.

Cesar was an avid reader. Those who knew him well know this. He might have carried Mao's little Red Book if that is what he was reading at that particular time, (in the mid '60s according to Doug). However, he might also have had a copy of the life of Gandhi to read as well. It was incredible the spectrum of reading material choices Cesar read at any given time. When he died, I read he had been reading a book on art. In my opinion, Cesar never judged anyone by what they read. On the contrary, from what I observed, whatever anyone read fascinated him. Cesar would literally stop what he was doing to inquire about what you were reading. That is what he did with me when he found me with my nose in my required reading of Utopia by Sir Thomas More. With Cesar, either he had already read the book and would want to discuss it with you or he would want to learn about it to read later. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

p.s. I still had the little Red Book with me at La Paz (1975-1978) which I had retained as a keepsake more than anything else. No one ever said anything to me. It was not hidden under my bed either.

Lester Silverman, 9/15/04

RE: Cesar and the little Red Book

I categorically don't believe in God, does that make me a communist.

* * * *

It was easy to see why Cesar would tie the farmworkers to religion although I find it alienating, and as much as it helped, all of the religious baloney also hurt.

While I'm at it. Thanks, Nick for supporting the boycott. In many of the mailings the boycott seems to have been put at the bottom of the UFW hierarchy. I, as other boycotters put in our time to help build a union to help others less fortunate, our time is and was worth no less than anyone else's.

As it turned out the people in the Boycott, gave many suggestions to the e-board and the top organizers, and very little of it was heeded. So Nick and who ever else was axed, in retrospect, one could say that the first ones that they came for were the boycotters, so why than would anyone be surprised that there was no one left when they came for the bigwigs.

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/15/04 (2)

RE: Cesar and the little Red Book

D.R. Lester: I see. No it didn't make you a communist. Not believing in God is your own belief system. I happened to have had my own is all. It would be helpful to the listserv if you can recall some of the ideas not heeded by the e-board or top organizers. Also, because I am curious to know. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Doug Adair, 9/15/04

RE: Cesar and the little Red Book

In a message dated 9/15/04 . . . [Abby Flores Rivera] writes:

Doug, I believe it was you who stated that you observed Cesar carrying Mao's little Red Book.

Dear Abby,

Great story, but no, it was Nick Jones' comments:

Although Cesar used plenty of left rhetoric and actually carried Mao's Little Red Book into George Meany's office in his camera bag when picking up the national AFL-CIO charter, Cesar was probably fearful of communists and the left.

And that sounds like Cesar was giving a symbolic "so there!" to Meany, who was an hysterical anti-Communist.. But Cesar might well have read Mao, he was a voracious reader...

I don't agree with Nick that Cesar was "fearful of Communists and the left", at least not in the Delano years. There was a feeling that there were anti-Communists (Leroy? Bill Kircher?) advising Cesar to keep his distance, so as not to give the opposition a chance to smear us. Supporters from more right wing groups (AFL, Catholic Church, Democratic Party) might complain to CC about something "too lefty" in the Malcriado, or something Dolores or Phillip said at a rally. And Cesar might pursue it. But I got the impression that Cesar welcomed a really wide-ranging debate in those years. If there was a saying of Mao's he might have endorsed in those years, it was "Let a thousand Flowers Bloom" but I think by the late 1960's, China was already into the Cultural Revolution, and Red Guards were pulling up all those weeds...

The Malcriado office at 40 Acres had wall-to-wall posters, c. 1968. Zapata with his gun, ("Viva la Revolucion!" was a radical chic "must have" in some student dorms in the 1960's; we made thousands of dollars for the union with that idea, first printed in Texas by yours truly in 1967)) and Pancho Villa, Fillmore Auditorium and Carlos Cortez... We had one of a map of South America, except the map was made of multiple pictures of Che Guevara, with the slogan, "One, ten, many Viet Nams"..... At one point, Jim Drake came by with this clip board, and told us, "It has been noticed that you have a poster of Che Guevara on your wall." Marcia Brooks Sanchez, noted, "And next to it is Emma Goldman, with the slogan, "If I can't dance at your Revolution, I don't want to be in your Party!" (Goldman was deported from Communist Russia for being an anarchist).

Che remained.

Viva la Revolucion! Viva la Causa!

Doug Adair,
El Malcriado, 1965-1970

Susan Drake, 9/15/04

RE: Four little girls and Apples & Honey

I also heard that 9/16, tomorrow, Mexicans around the world will sing their national anthem – at noon. For that historical day. *El dia de independencia, verdad?*

Susan

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/15/04

RE: Four little girls and Apples & Honey

S: This the first I've heard about singing the Mexican National Anthem tomorrow at noon, Mexican Independence Day. Forget it... oohh, amiga. I'll only be humming if that's the case. I've never gotten the words right no matter how hard I've tried. Maybe we are to sing it at midnight after the Grito de Dolores. That is the customary time to begin the celebration instead of daytime/ noon on the 16th.

A September 16th blessing to everyone. VIVA MEXICO – sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Alberto Escalante, 9/15/04

RE: We were quite a randy bunch!

Dear Beloved Mr. Duck and el resto de los Campesinos Revolucionarios,

My personal all-time favorite was a poster of Jesus Cristo with 2 bandoleros across his chest. It was a blow up of a cover of one of my Leftist magazines... "Realities" from France. I carried it everywhere I was sent with the organizing dept. Yes, I would dust and clean up whatever little nook or cranny I was given to set up my machine guns (gestetner stencil cutter and printing press) and put up my little posters of CEC and the Jesus Realities poster...I also had a Paramahansa Yogananda photograph from my SRF pre-UFW days...SRF meaning Self Realization Fellowship a Kriya Yoga devotion I shared in common with my good friend Ann McGregor, where ever she may be (anybody know if she is still alive?) My, those were some very exciting days when we thought we could actually change the world and make everything into a real workers state. Abajo con los Rancheros! La tierra pertenece a los que lo trababja! And a few other dichos considered quite radical, possibly even Radically Chic... but by the time that the Revolution reached the pages of Vanity Faire, ya estuvo ya estaba acabado todo menos las memorias de un tiempo puro padre, ese! Oh yes, we were quite avante garde the Vanguard, la Guardia Adelante....

Oh, but I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now,*

Alberto Escalante

*(from the song "My Back Pages" By Robert Zimmerman)

Chris Schneider, 9/15/04

RE: We were quite a randy bunch!

Alberto wrote:

I also had a Paramahansa Yogananda photograph from my SRF pre-UFW days...SRF meaning Self Realization Fellowship a Kriya Yoga devotion I shared in common with my good friend Ann McGregor, where ever she may be (anybody know if she is still alive?)

Ann now resides in Hanford. She recently published a book entitled "Remembering Cesar" with contributions from quite a few members of the listserv---and photos by George Elfie Balis.

Susan Drake, 9/15/04

RE: Ann McGregor

Ann McGregor is thriving in Cambria, CA (near Hearst Castle on the central coast). She moved there the week the war started, or around then, and was the first one standing against the war--in front of Cambria's tiny post office. Soon others, including one of my childhood friends, joined her. She's chubby, still dimpled, walks with a cane and spreads sparkling, passionate social justice energy wherever she goes. * * * * She lives in a small apartment filled with farm worker and other materials, some activist To Do business on her little table at all times. What a wonder! Be sure to check Remembering Cesar, the book she and photojournalist Geo. Ballis did, a collection of Geo's photos and essays by coworkers in the movement. Your bookstore can order it thru American West in Sanger, CA.

Susan Drake (1962-1973)

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/16/04

RE: Midnight 15th of September

Abby... I was in East L.A. for "El Grito," the call that woke the Mejicanos to "La Guerra de Liberacion." We were with our consuegras from Mexico City together with Sal and Cynthia y echemos unos gritos fuertes con todos "Que Viva Mejico".. In Mexico City it began at around 10 p.m., with fireworks and los politicos incluyendo Fox y su grandson singing. Thanks so much for

the words. We had a great discussion about the “Huelga General” that is in the making re: Latinos having a one day work stoppage, just to make a point. Interesting talk.

I hope I’m not imposing on anyone, but I want to share the thoughts of the little huelgistas who hopefully carry on the spirit that brought so many together in a just cause, that remains as relevant today as it was when we carried our Huelga flags. While we did what we passionately thought was important, there were the children, and what we did impacted their lives. P.S. While married in a civil ceremony last year, we are coming together for a religious ceremony with both sides of the family this weekend in Rosarito, Mexico.

I include this essay that Sal wrote about his Dad.

Sal Murguía, 9/16/04

Mom,

Feel free to forward this to anyone who cares:

I’m shocked, I should say overwhelmed by the response and emotions being shared towards my father’s retirement. I was young, almost too young to appreciate what the union stood for and understand my father’s role in the matter. I had a very different childhood from my siblings. Compared to what they experienced I was spoiled, privileged, and ignorant. I grew up in Tehachapi separated from the movement. Even though it was only 10 miles away from La Paz, it might as well have been another country.

When I was young I noticed I was different, my family was different, my skin color was different, and most notably, my father was different. He wasn’t like all of the other dad’s, especially my friend’s. He didn’t look like my friend’s dads, he didn’t dress like my friend’s dads and he didn’t talk like my friend’s dads. To me, my father was the guy who never smiled, always worked, talked to me when I was in trouble, and had a funny looking hand. Did I play catch with my dad? Nope. Did he teach me how to hit? No way. Did I go fishing with him? Not even. I was confused because here I was involved in so many activities watching my friend’s fathers come to all of their games, participate in a lot of their activities and where was mine? Work! But in my mind he just wasn’t there. Did I resent it? Yeah. Did I want him to be like my friends’ fathers? You bet. I thought he was the father that didn’t care and I just wanted him to be like a “normal” father who spent time with his son. I thought I had my dad all figured out at that age, but there was one instant that started to change my perception.

When I was 12, I played for the Little League Cardinals. We were the best team and we were working on winning the championship. It was the last game of the year and everyone in town was there to watch us play. That was everyone except my dad. During warm-ups I looked into the stands and looked for my dad. Was he there? No. Oh well I was kind of used to it by then. The game went on and it was pretty tight. We were down by one, there was two on and two out in the bottom of the 5th. At that age we played 6 innings and if we took the lead we could close out the game with our “ace” Eric Knowles in the top of the inning. Anways, two on two out and guess who’s on deck? You guessed it, yours truly. Right before I leave the on-deck circle and enter the batters box I hear a voice from behind me in broken English say, “Get a heet Salvado.” I turned around and standing right behind the fence next to the dugout was my father with his usual stern like expression. With those words as my inspiration, I smacked the first pitch into the right-center gap and hustled my way for an inside-the-park home-run! Cardinals lead and we took care of the opposition in the top half of the inning! (side note: I told my friends that story and some of my teammates in high school used to imitate my father to inspire me to get a hit.)

After that moment I knew my father cared, and as I grew older I started to understand his world a lot better. My father never ceases to amaze me. As he grew older he began to open-up, show a softer side and demonstrate a wisdom that could only come with his experience. After my last sibling left for college in 1990 I was left alone with my parents and a father who I didn’t completely understand. What happened was an experience that I will always treasure. My father began to share with me his life before he came to the U.S. He taught me what it meant to be a strong, proud, honest, humble, and forgiving man. When he broke his hip and was told that he

couldn't walk again, I was there to witness his first steps. To this day I still have the walking stick he carved out of wood and carry it with me in the trunk of my car. When my brother Benito was in trouble it was my Dad who told me, "You have to be a good son to your mom because she's goin through a tough time right now." After September 11th, I was ranting angrily and my father told me, "Salvador, why are you so angry? Being angry and fighting never solves anything. War and revenge is never good."

I could write a novel on the simple wisdom of my father. He's like Mr. Miagi and Yoda rolled into one. A serious man who I didn't understand and was resentful towards as a child, to a man who smiles and laughs with an inner peace.

I'm proud of my father, I'm proud to be his son and I'm proud to call myself a Murguia. My father, next to my mother and wife is the most amazing person I know. Besides, who else do you know can get hit by a car at his age and tell you the next day, "Oh, I'm o.k. just a little sore...." That's my father one tough hombre! Te quiero papa!

Sal Murguia

Roberto Bustos, 9/16/04 (1)

RE: Four little girls and Apples & Honey

Let's not forget the other "Grito" that happen on the same day, 16th de Septiembre when thousands of farmworkers said enough is enough! "Huelga, Huelga, Huelga, Viva los Campesinos, Viva La Union, Viva Cesar Chavez! Roberto Bustos (Capitan) 1965-1972

Roberto Bustos, 9/16/04 (2)

RE: WHAT WE FAILED TO DO

hola, Everyone, have we forgotten the re-union we talked about a while back! is it possible to get (try) everyone back for one more get together? I would love to see it get done. I would be one of the organizers to help set it up, if it decided to have it in Delano, where it all started! its been quiet for a while on the subject. what do you say, is it possible, or only a dream! lets hash it out some more, se puede? Roberto Bustos (capitan) 1965-1972 y todavia! gracias

Susan Drake, 9/16/04 (1)

RE: WHAT WE FAILED TO DO

Where in Delano? It's great, Roberto that you'd help put it together. But as I said early on, it'll take someone with the money and time to plan, get a permit if we're at a park. Or maybe we just designate a time and place (Garces Park?) and take care of our own food. It was nearly impossible to connect with people at La Paz in March because we had no name tags, no place to sign in where others might see who was there, and because we'd changed enough to be unrecognizable. I think late Feb. or March might give everyone enough time to recover from the holidays, let the Delano fog lift, and enjoy springtime together. Thanks for reminding us.

Susan Drake (1962-73)

Jerry Kay, 9/16/04

RE: About Cesar and communists

From Jerry Kay '69-'75 (NY, Bay Area, Salinas, Florida)

I have two things to say about this discussion. First, from the beginning I was told--by Dolores and others--that almost anyone can work for La Causa as long as you did not bring an agenda to the cause. In other words, hold whatever beliefs you may, marxist, pacifist, traditional unionist, liberation Catholicism, old-style Catholicism, hippie new age, Judiasm, Rosacruzian (no kidding, ask Oscar Mondragon)--whatever--BUT, you do not push your own agenda.

I think that Cesar and Dolores from the getgo, and probably from the very pragmatic lessons of Fred Ross had deep inner convictions of their own, deeply rooted in a kind of American style of

struggle that refused to require adherence to any one overall dogma. I tended in those days toward a fuzzy Marxist philosophy but Cesar's style--Catholic church and all--was working better than most other organizations trying to power to the people.

And that suited me and a lot of others just fine. We had just about everyone in the union and many left when they felt that Cesar did not live up to their view of how the union should operate. Now I left in '75 and spent the last two years in Florida, so I didn't see much of what went on right around Cesar (which was fine with me).

However, when we brought Cesar to Florida in '74 and organized a big Farmworker Fiesta with all kinds of liberals, officials, union folks, boycott supporters, etc. I got him on some Cuban radio stations to talk. Now the Cuban community was as fractured as could be, and we really did have a lot of Cuban supporters. BUT, the question I was so scared they might ask him in an interview was, "What do you think of Castro?" I agonized over what he should say, though I was a supporter of the revolution. I dissolved my own beliefs and, came up with something for him to answer. (at that time we were again pushing for a law allowing elections in the fields).

in the car driving with Cesar to the Cuban radio station I broached the subject with him and suggested that he give an answer like this to a question about what he thought of Castro and Cuba: "We're trying to get elections for farm workers in the fields to determine their own destiny, so it's hard to support a government that really doesn't allow their own people to have free elections."

Well, Cesar immediately hit the roof, chatised me and said, "No, I will not say something like that. If the Cubans want to support us for what we are doing here, that's great; but I'm not going to go and criticize Cuba."

Virginia Nesmith, 9/16/04

RE: FLOC wins contract in North Carolina!

Dear UFWM Supporters,

There is great news from North Carolina! Today (Mexican Independence Day) the Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) is announcing the signing of an agreement between FLOC, the NC Grower's Association, and Mt. Olive. (Press release below and details of benefits for workers.)

This victory comes after 5 years of boycott and several intense months of organizing, discussions with workers and negotiations. These agreements end the boycott of Mt. Olive Pickles!

NFWM has had staff in North Carolina since 1997 supporting FLOC's efforts. Three of our staff and one board member were in North Carolina in July and August participating in the campaign. We celebrate this great victory with FLOC and with the farm workers. We salute Mt. Olive and the North Carolina Growers Association for recognizing that it is in their interest to establish just relationships with their workers.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this effort over the years. Without you, it would not have been possible. In many ways this is just the beginning... now that a contract will be signed, the real work of implementing the changes begin... but HISTORY IS BEING MADE IN NORTH CAROLINA.

[Reprint of NFWM press release, "Precedent-Setting Agreement Reached; Mt. Olive Pickle Boycott Over"]

Susan Drake, 9/16/04 (2)

RE: FLOC wins contract in North Carolina!

Hallelujah! Susan

Hope Lopez Fierro, 9/16/04

RE: El Himno Nacional Mejicano

Abby:

Muchisimas Gracias for the Himno lyrics.

All I remember is “Mejicanos al Grito de Guerra.” I find it ironic that this national anthem is referred to as an himno, a hymn, as it is all about WAR. Go figure.

Closer to home, the US national anthem is also about WAR, “how proudly we hail???”

A belated input regarding the 'little red book'. Somebody, in Philadelphia, who saw some Communistic mentality in me, provided me with a copy of the little book. I thought it was cute. I love all colors as long as they're red I still keep the little book among my Guerra por la Justicia souvenirs. I have not read it, but now that I'm informed it's a communist book, I'm going to read it from cover to cover and find out what the fuss was all about.

During my assigned task to stop grapes in Philly, I was criticized by well thinking boycott supporters, and the complaint went to Cesar that I was scheduled to speak @ a Young Socialist Convention in Philadelphia. I responded that if I could get the devil to stop buying grapes from California, I would recruit the SOB. As it turned out, I didn't have to recruit the devil, because the Good Lord was on our side.

I still don't buy grapes.

Hope Lopez - '66-74

Graciela Cisneros, 9/17/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

When the subject of reunion on the listserv was mentioned, I emailed someone and asked to be kept informed, after all it is only about a 20 hr. drive to Calif.

Then Sarah Welch suggested a Northwest – UFW Reunion. So Sarah Welch, Nancy Ryan (Welch), and I are hosting a UFW Reunion on Sat. the 16th of Oct.

Mostly we have been sending invitations to former NW UFW staff, but should any of you find yourselves in Seattle, Washington please join us for a late afternoon potluck, reminiscing and chisme.

I think regional reunions make sense until next year, we could plan for a national reunion sometime between the 8th and the 16 of Sept, 2005.

* * * *

Chris Schneider, 9/17/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

How about a national reunion on September 8, 2005 in Delano – the forty year anniversary of the Great Delano Strike?

Kate Colwell, 9/17/04

Who knows when Cesar felt what about communists, but I do remember a funny story:

I was working a big fund raiser at a very expensive house in the Bay Area in 1976. While watching his car with some of Cesar's guards they told me that on the long drive up the driveway he'd said that "After the Revolution, this house will be a summer retreat for farm workers and their families".

Viva la justicia.

Kate Colwell

Jose Gomez, 9/17/04

RE: Red-baiting and the AFL-CIA

The recent documentation on this listserv got me to remembering a lot of things about Cesar, Mao, Castro, and the AFL-CIA. I made a list of five things I could write about: the AFL-CIO's red-baiting of Cesar, Cesar's comments to me after I returned from my leave to serve with the Venceremos Brigade in Cuba, my lies to the FBI when they asked me questions about people at La Paz (including Nick Jones), Cesar's authorization of the dissemination of one of the essays in Mao's "little red book," and the time I took down the huge Mao, Stalin, Trotsky and Lenin posters that had been put up in prominent places in the New York Boycott office by the Gino Parenti cult that filled the void created by Richie Ross's abandonment of his New York post. Since I am gearing up for the beginning of the new academic year in 10 days, I have time right now to write only one of these. There's been a lot of talk about Cesar's red-baiting. This one is about the AFL-CIO's red baiting -- of Cesar.

In 1972, news about the UFW-Coca Cola contract for Minute Maid's orange grove workers made the front page of the New York Times. As coordinator of the New York Boycott at the time, I received a phone call from one of the local officers (I will need help to refresh my memory for his name) of the Meatcutters Union. I was told that a union leader from Chile whom they were hosting for a short visit to New York had seen the Times article and very much wanted to talk to Cesar. The union leader was Luis Figueroa, a Communist and president of the Central Unica de Trabajadores (C.U.T.), the Chilean labor federation.

I worked with the Meatcutters Union to try to arrange a visit by Figueroa to La Paz, but because of some time and travel constraints, we were not able to pull it off. Instead, the Meatcutters invited me to have dinner with Figueroa to talk about the Union. One of the officers of the Meatcutters Union kept saying to me, "Hell, I'm not afraid to have a meeting with a Communist, are you? Hell, if it weren't for the Communists we wouldn't have a union!" I suspected that he was a Communist himself and that he was just testing me, since he was from one of the progressive locals of the Meatcutters Union and clearly had been around a long time. He stopped pressing this point only after I assured him that I was excited about meeting with Figueroa.

I don't know what Figueroa thought of me with my "costume": Levis, combat boots, blue work chambray shirt, and red button with the black eagle, but I took an instant liking to him because he reminded me of a well-liked professor of Central American literature that I had met at the University of Costa Rica in the mid 60's: dapper in his suit, grandfatherly and very kind in a way that immediately made me feel at ease. He was fascinated by the idea of a farmworkers' union in the United States and this man named Cesar Chavez he had read about in the New York Times. Most of his questions centered around the Union's boycott activity. He was particularly curious about how we had leveraged the power and fame of the Great Grape Boycott to pressure one of the world's corporate giants, Coca-Cola, to sign a union contract.

That dinner was one of those special, satisfying events that unexpectedly and rarely come into one's life. I recall that dinner as one of highlights of my tenure in New York. We exchanged lapel buttons. I cherished the C.U.T. button until I gave it to Maria Rifo three years later as I left La Paz for the last time. One weekend at La Paz in 1973, I ran into Figueroa's assigned traveling interpreter. I don't recall his name; I think he was among a group of Union supporters in the Bay Area somewhere (San Jose? I think Liza Hirsch may know).

At the end of the dinner, Figueroa expressed deep regrets that he would not get to meet Cesar, so I offered to arrange a phone call between them the next day. Cesar jumped at the opportunity. We agreed to a time when Cesar would call Figueroa's hotel room via the Union's WATS line. Before he left New York, Figueroa called to give his despedida and to invite me to visit Chile. The course of political history, altered by covert CIA and AFL-CIO activities that we now know were well underway as we spoke, ensured that such a visit would not happen.

Cesar later told me that he had had a fascinating and cordial talk with Figueroa. He also said that the very next day he had received a phone call from George Meany's office. The AFL-CIO demanded to know why Cesar had talked to this Chilean Communist. The AFL-CIO apparently knew almost word for word what Cesar and Figueroa had talked about. In those days we all shared a degree of "prudent paranoia" that we were under surveillance of some type. Of course, I

assumed that the CIA and/or FBI were watching Figueroa's every move and recording every word, but I was shocked to learn that the AFL-CIO had a pipeline to this intelligence.

Of course, much more than a pipeline was involved. Through documents now available through FOIA, we now know that our paranoia wasn't prudent enough. The AFL-CIO, through its government-funded American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), was an active and key participant in the Nixon administration's covert activities to sabotage the Chilean economy, create social chaos and overthrow Salvador Allende. The C.U.T. was AIFLD's main target. In a May 19, 2003 article ("Labor's Cold War") in the The Nation Magazine, Tim Shorrock writes:

"According to documents I've unearthed in the AFL-CIO's archives, AIFLD's program in Chile was closely coordinated with the US Embassy and dovetailed with one of the CIA's key aims in Chile: to split the Chilean labor movement and create a trade union base of opposition to Allende, who was viewed as dangerously anti-American and a pawn of the Soviet Union.

AIFLD's primary target was the 1-million-member Central Unica de Trabajadores (CUT), Chile's largest labor federation. It was led during the Allende years by a Communist, Luis Figueroa, whom Allende appointed labor minister in 1972. The campaign to divide the CUT began in earnest in the spring of 1971, after Allende had strengthened his governing coalition in municipal elections. In response, AIFLD, in consultation with US diplomats and the Agency for International Development (AID), became more aggressive in seeking to expand US influence inside the CUT. That shift was made "with the full support of the Embassy and AID" and involved "the establishment of a dialogue between ourselves and the non-communist Allendista trade unionists," Jesse Friedman, AIFLD's regional director for South America, explained to Andrew McLellan, the AFL-CIO's director for inter-American affairs. Under the plan, Friedman wrote, AIFLD would invite "influential leaders" from selected unions to Washington to show them "that they have been misled in the formation of their concept of the United States."

Robert O'Neill, AIFLD's representative in Santiago, was enthusiastic, pointing out that US visits by Chilean unionists were the only way that AIFLD's allies "can grow and eventually control the trade union movement here." (Emphasis added.) He urged other US unions to get involved because a "reinforced effort would add to the unrest." In another cable, O'Neill laid out an ambitious plan to win over workers in the strategic copper, oil, maritime, airline and banking industries so they "could initially form a block within CUT to defend their positions and eventually be the basis for a break-up of CUT." But he hastened to add that "undeniably and unfortunately, the majority of organized Chilean workers still back Marxist leadership, at least in trade union elections."

In the fall of 1973, a series of strikes by truckers, doctors and shop owners paralyzed Chile, giving Pinochet the pretext to launch his coup. The strikes, which were partially funded by the CIA, were no surprise to the AFL-CIO: The last pre-coup document in the Chile files, dated May 22, 1973, shows that at least two senior AFL-CIO officials had advance knowledge of the work stoppages. Bus and truckers' unions "plan for unified strike action" in "early fall, 1973," McLellan wrote to Jay Lovestone, the apostate Communist who headed the AFL-CIO's international affairs department.

Pinochet, however, saw all unions, not just left-leaning ones, as the enemy. One of his first acts after seizing power was to outlaw the CUT. In the months following September 11, hundreds of trade unionists--including some who had worked with AIFLD--were rounded up, many never to be seen again. Figueroa managed to make his way to the Swedish Embassy, where he suffered a nervous breakdown during a monthslong stay. In a 1975 interview in Mexico, where he died several years later, he accused AIFLD of "13 years of massive social espionage."

* * *

One 1975 U.S. Government report, once top secret, only for the eyes of the Congress' Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities, is "Covert Action in Chile 1963-1973" (also known as the "Church Report"). It gives considerable detail about the techniques and strategies pursued, including projects directed at "combating the communist-dominated CENTRAL UNICA DE TRABAJADORES CHILENOS (CUTCH) and supporting democratic labor groups." * * * *

Jose Gomez
1970-1975 (NJ, NY and DC Boycott; La Paz)

Joaquin Murguia, 9/17/04

RE: Cesar and the little Red Book

I remember that a shipment of the little Red Book was received at La Paz as well. They were not passed around en masse, but I do recall that I did take a copy for myself. I found it difficult to reconcile what I read in the Red Book and what was transpiring in China. In my opinion, the "Great Leap Forward", was neither great or forward.

I also recall that at one time the Taller Grafico was offering silk screened shirts with Che Guevara on the front and I wore mine on more than one occasion to UFW events. I recall participating in a march from Mecca to Coachella and along with the usual gritos of Viva La Huelga and Viva Chavez, there was an occasional Viva Che.

The revolutionary in me also proudly displayed the Zapata poster that the Taller Grafico sold as well as the buttons with the same image. If anyone can take a poster that says "It is better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees" and say it isn't revolutionary thinking, I'd be the most surprised person in the room.

The fact of the matter is that what the union was doing was revolutionary. The approach and the methods were revolutionary. Where as many other movements at the time sought to be exclusionary, Le. the Black Panthers and the Brown Berets, the union was inclusionary utilizing people from all walks of life and political leanings.

Unfortunately, the revolutionary "outside the box" thinking that drove the union in its early years later became a reason to question someone's loyalty if they didn't toe the party line. The euphemism that was often used was that they had "their own agenda." Many a talented person left or were forced out because their "agenda" dared to challenge the status quo and ask people to again try to look at things in a different light.

As someone once related to me, "change is inevitable, growth is optional." As the world around the UFW changed, the union did not continue to grow up from its infancy and mature. The result was the same as what occurred in the Soviet Union, it collapsed and is now just a shadow of its former self. Though we relive and revisit the former successes, we must also revisit the failures because it has been said that wisdom comes from experience and experience comes from mistakes.

Joaquin Murguia
San Francisco, Delano, La Paz, 1967-1979

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/17/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR CHAVEZ DO IT?

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Without doubt, future academics and readers will ask the question: HOW did Cesar Chavez overcome the obstacles he faced in order to build the first farmworker union in the history of California (and the U.S.)?

There were 2 obstacles: (1) California agribusiness, (2) California farmworkers.

FIRST OBSTACLE - California Agribusiness

Agribusiness was the state's largest industry and virulently opposed to unionization. It had a long history of successfully crushing attempts to organize farmworkers by using law enforcement violence, arrests and jail sentences, anti-communist smear campaigns, wholesale importation of strikebreakers, and by flooding the labor market with bracero-type foreign worker programs.

California Central Valley agribusiness/growers controlled local law enforcement, county courts, local politicians, local media, school boards, the chamber of commerce and mainline churches. The Valley's largest employers were growers and agricultural-related businesses.

SECOND OBSTACLE - California Farmworkers

The California agribusiness work force consisted of immigrants and foreign nationals, who migrated long distances throughout the state to follow the harvests and the seasons of the crops. One of the practical consequences of such migrant status is that farmworkers were unable to establish roots in the communities in which they work.

Farmworkers were especially resistant to unionization because: (1) farmworkers were completely dependent upon jobs made available to them, and the growers controlled these jobs, not the union; (2) workers earned substandard wages and saw no tangible benefit in paying union dues, especially when there were no union contracts in place; (3) there was no historically demonstrated reason for farmworkers to believe that a union would prevail over the growers, e.g., strikes at harvest time had never been effective to achieve union recognition; (4) workers who sign union authorization cards or who campaign for a union were routinely fired; (5) workers were not covered by the protections of any federal or state labor law legislation; and (6) the racial separation of farmworkers by various types of harvest and non-harvest work bred distrust, jealousy and enmity among the workers.

YOU WERE PRESENT DURING THIS HISTORICAL PERIOD.

HOW DID CESAR OVERCOME THESE OBSTACLES AND CREATE THE FIRST FARMWORKER UNION IN HISTORY?

What is your view? (I am not looking for an essay, just a few paragraphs.)

Thank you.

Alberto Escalante, 9/18/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR CHAVEZ DO IT? mis respuestas

In a message dated 9/17/2004 . . . the Moderator asked us: *"How did Cesar overcome the obstacles he faced in order to build the first farmworker union in the history of California (and the U.S.)?"*

FIRST OBSTACLE - California Agribusiness

I must submit that to me it was the success and the incredible financial impact of the Boycott that literally forced the growers to the bargaining table in 1965, 1970 & 1975. That's the only thing they (The Growers) ever listened to or cared about...their damn wallets!! They have no heart or soul, human suffering meant little or nothing to them they only cared about if they had enough shekels in their pockets. Forget the strikes, too. They just kept bringing in more and more scabs. It's when the produce started to rot in the stores and packing sheds that they suddenly figured "Hey, the UFW's kicking me too hard in the wallet!" that they relented & gave in! And Cesar was a master at gathering consumer support for the Boycott.

SECOND OBSTACLE - California Farmworkers

Although the UFWOC had been marginally effective with the first wave of elections due (in large part) to Cesar and the fact that during the mid to late '60's he seemed to project an almost mystical, uniquely charismatic aura which held an incredible attraction on a very dedicated following that he had amongst mostly the older Filipinos and the migrant Mexican farmworkers, the majority of which were devout Catholics. Cesar had an incredible effect on their Messianic Obsessive attitudes. Hence the many Altars and Virgin de Guadalupe banners which became almost de riger

during the early days. And after Bobby Kennedy shouted out "HOOL-GAH!" that was it. The UFW movement became an almost religious experience. And it was almost as common to see farmworkers down on their knees in supplicant prayer as it was to see them carrying a picket sign. And as Gandhian non-violent protest became the union's tour de force, unlike the "Break bones and kick ass" old style of union organizing, the UFW became La Causa and La Causa attracted some "Leftists" to the UFW. 1970 ushered in what should have been the "Glory Days" for the Union with the industry wide contracts and mass appeal. Instead, after the growers had gotten fat enough selling Union Label produce, in 1973 they entered into "sweetheart" talks and negotiations with the grower oriented Western Conference of Teamsters (the same ones that the UFW had beaten in 1969-70). This really angered the farmworkers who felt that the growers had once again betrayed them. They only needed to be asked to go out on strike, demanding that they be allowed to choose their own Union. The strike turned deadly which then triggered the big 1973 Boycotts. Which eventually led to the formation of the ARLA & the Historic UFW string of Farmworker election victories of 1975 1976 and 1977. Sadly though some horrible contract negotiations and then after the contracts had been ratified, the even worse contract administration that took place, nearly decimated the Union which by then had no real enemies but itself to contend with. To whit the discussions regarding blacklisting, witch hunts, paranoia, reluctance on the part of the UFW to support the development of strong ranch committees and a new generation of farm worker leadership. Now, given their own choice many farmworkers have chosen to "go it alone" instead of with the UFW. Hopefully, with a new strata of farm workers Artie Rodriguez and company can pull it off once more. Because they're still going at it 24/7, como siempre! En Solidaridad...

Alberto Escalante

(p.s. Si hiso varias veces antes, aver 'si se puede(?)' hacer otra vez.. sera algo suave si le dan gas otra vez. Yo les tengo fe que si, lo van hacer otra vez, espero unas muestras de un cambio para el mejor! Como se dice Si Se Puded!) Hey, I'm just honing up my spanglish for the bid "Bilingual-Commingle of 2004" ~ "Voten para John Kerry y John Edwards en 2004" ~

Barbara Pruett, 9/18/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR CHAVEZ DO IT?

I think that one of the most important factors that enabled Cesar to overcome the obstacles he faced was that he didn't set a date (or a deadline) to achieve his most important goal: to organize farm workers. He didn't have a date by which he had to achieve this goal. He never said "If this or that doesn't happen by a certain date, I've failed my ultimate goal of organizing farm workers." So there was no way he could fail. Sure, there were some dates which had to be met in order to satisfy individual deadlines and outcomes of individual activities along the way, but they alone did not determine the final outcome. There may have been "blips" along the way, both successes and failures, but they took their place along the road of the journey.

This wasn't an abstract philosophical approach for Cesar, it was an everyday practical approach for him. Therefore whatever obstacles he had to face to achieve his goal were never elements that caused him to consider quitting. Individual obstacles may have caused some change in the approach or direction he took along the way in order to achieve his goal, but they did not change the fact that the trip toward the goal always continued. In this concept, obstacles take on a different appearance and value regarding their impact on the overall goal that Cesar worked to achieve. He never saw any obstacle as having the power to end his journey toward his goal. An obstacle might have been able to cause a change in how he approached achieving his goal, and may have lengthened the trip, but it could not stop it because there was no deadline or artificial end for achieving the goal.

Barbara Pruett

Richard Ybarra, 9/18/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR CHAVEZ DO IT?

Barbara,

This is one of the most astute and insightful comments yet recorded in LeRoy's documentation project.

Richard

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/18/04

RE: REALITY CHECK – ELLEN STARBIRD

GREETINGS,

Ellen Starbird 1975-1979 sent this response to my question, "How Did Cesar Do It". She entitled her response REALITY CHECK and it is with her permission that I send it along to the discussion group:

Ellen Starbird, 9/18/04

He didn't.

The Southern tenant and wood cutter unions existed as precursors to the Civil Rights movement in the 30s, 40s and 50s. The IWW of course preceded these efforts during and after WWI. Each of these efforts were smashed by the collusion of state sponsored and state permitted terrorism. The ten year flash in the pan of each of these unionizing efforts were by far more effective and long term than any of the UFW contracts. Any of them could more rightly be called the first agricultural union in the U.S.

There is however, still no organization that represents a labor market force in the California Agro business sector sufficient to be an influence on wages. There is in short, no union of consequence to Farm Workers such that would influence the wages, hours and working conditions of farm labor in the U.S., nor in California.

At no time during the historical period in question was the UFW an enduring bargaining agent of labor market saturation sufficient to widely influence the wages of workers in the agro-business industry.

What Cesar did do was usurp the leadership of the Filipino unionists who started the strike in Delano, promising to deliver the support of Mexican farm labor and prevent scabbing.

He led an organization capable of generating publicity and mobilizing large numbers of farm workers for small periods of time in very directed efforts like boycotts and democratic electoral campaigns that brought greater legal protections and mandated farm workers receive unemployment insurance, etc. such protections as were provided to other workers.

These legal benefits seeking to prevent class warfare in the U.S. during the depression era were largely made available to workers in labor sectors that excluded people of color from the FOR period of federal legislation. But these laws, like the NLRA were written to exclude people of color so as not to alienate Southern Dixicrat Senators and Congresspersons of that pre WWII era. Hospital workers, religious workers, farm workers and domestics are jobs specifically excluded from protection for no reason save these are jobs that during the Roosevelt administration were available to workers of color.

The California agribusiness work force at the time of Chavez consisted only partly of immigrants and foreign nationals. During the 70s in the Coachella Valley close to a third of the unionized farm labor force consisted of U.S. citizens, another third were legal immigrants. Ironically the improvements in labor law on paper won by the UFW served to decrease the willingness of growers to hire citizens and immigrants with access to the court system, and therefore a right to effectively claim these benefits. The number of citizen and documented laborers in the labor market has decreased since then, arguably as a consequence of grower animus to worker negotiations.

- Ellen Starbird

Jerry Kay, 9/18/04

RE: How did Cesar do it?

From Jerry Kay: (read down to bottom)

I agree with those who have so far written about Cesar's successes due to:

- 1) his overall commitment without time limit.
- 2) use of Fred Ross's methodical approach to grass roots organizing where there is a doable strategy, measureable results and accountability.
- 3) being able to overcome then all-fracturing racism that doomed so many efforts before, by joining in with the Filipino strikers and forging a tough-love alliance. (By the way, I hope Andy Imutan soon finished his memoirs of those times and how that alliance actually got to be).
- 4) Using non-violence (when it was not a popular tactic among farm workers) so that the public did not brand the union like so many progressive causes of the day, from the Panthers to Weathermen, allowing the feds to come in and blow them away. I know it was more than a tactic, but it was a wise one, especially after the assassination of Martin Luther King, thereby defacto making Cesar the foremost advocate among poor people of non-violence.

WHICH LEADS ME TO THE LAST ONE AND MADE THE WHOLE BOYCOTT POSSIBLE AND CESAR A NATIONAL FIGURE:

- 5) THE WHOLE CIVIL RIGHTS/ANTI-WAR ERA--without this time, nothing like it since the labor movement of the 30's, nothing like it since--there would have been no mass acceptance of the boycott or much care about the plight of farm wworkers, black and Chicano city movements. We suddenly had a huge college generation, picking up on the energies of these movements. Plus, and this is critical for me--every 18 year-old American kid had to register for the draft and be faced with going to war in Vietnam. So a lot of us questioned that, began questioning the assassination of John Kennedy, really got radicalized with the assassinations of Bobby and MLK--and--boom--we had the makings of the whole movement (in short).

So, we might say, that one of the elements was that Cesar got lucky in the time he chose to do this and made good use of that.

With the 'demise' of the movement, we had nothing but nihilism and consumerism to appeal to youth (okay, we had a simmering environmental movement), and the poorer kids went straight to where the money and new energy was: local gangs.

Jerry Kay

Kate Colwell, 9/18/04

RE: Gomez, Jose" on red baiting

Jose:

I thought I knew a lot of what happened in those terrible years around US foreign policy. AFL-CIO involvement I hadn't suspected.

How sad.

Kate

Alberto Escalante, 9/18/04

RE: DIGNITY, ELLEN, DIGNITY

Brother Leroy Chatfield, Document Project Moderator,

I greatly admire Sister Ellen Starbird. She is quite an accurate observer and from what I can tell by her wonderful style and manner of writing she is also a highly intelligent and a very focused individual. And... I must conclude that for the most part her critical analysis and assessment was brutal but accurate. Still it would be hard for her, an Anglo, albeit an Anglo woman, to understand what the one really significant accomplishment of the entire Causa/UFW phenomenon was, it was

DIGNITY! Something much more precious than anything material. But as an Anglo, I doubt that she can fathom what it meant to the Mexican workers to feel that sense of ethnic pride that the Union enabled the Campesinos to realize. Cesar instilled a sense of ethnic and worker pride into much of the stoop labor industry. I once talked with a psychologist about the groveling nature of stoop labor and why the growers had resisted the removal and replacement of the infamous "el cortito" or short handled hoe with the more conventional long handled hoe. He said that as long as the workers were forced to work with their heads and bodies nearly parallel to the ground, they were being subjected to a degrading sense of who they were and what their inherent worth as both men and workers was. Cesar summed it up quite succinctly using his patented, wry sense of humor when he'd tell the story of the Man who was traveling to another area when he came across a man who had some cute little puppies he was trying to give away. As they wiggled and rolled around, the man who has traveling really wanted one but couldn't take one just yet so he asked the guy who was trying to give the puppies away if he could...."Hold on to one of them for me. I'll be back this way in a couple of days!" The man with the puppies said "Fine, I'll see you then, if I still have any (puppies) left!" A couple of days later the guy comes back through the area where he'd encountered the guy with the puppies...who as luck would have it was still in the same spot, except that now he wasn't giving the puppies away, but instead wanted \$500 dollors a piece for the little dogs! "Hey, what's all this? A couple of days ago you wanted to give me a puppy. And now you want me to pay you \$500 for one! How come?" "Well..." the man smiled (CEC would then smile one of his drop dead gorgeous smiles at this juncture) and said "That was before the puppies opened their eyes! Now that they can see they're worth MUCH MORE!" The moral to the story being that once a worker has been organized and was able to see what power they wielded as part of an organized work force....invariably, their sense of self worth and self-edification was greatly improved. The UFW instilled a sense of dignity and pride into the workers, who would no longer have to play "el peon" to "el Patron" ..."Dignity," Sister Ellen is sorta like "a woman's right of choice." Something so intrinsic that had been denied to us because of our station in life. But once we tasted it, once we felt it swelling inside our chests we knew they'd have to kill us if they ever tried to take it (our Dignity) away again. Better to die once standing proud, than to die a thousand times on our knees!

As always your Brother in the Struggle,

Alberto Escalante

(p.s. Si hiso varias veces antes, aver 'si se puede(?)' hacer otra vez.. sera algo suave si le dan gas otra vez. Yo les tengo fe que si, lo van hacer otra ves, espero unas muestras de un cambio para el mejor! Como se dice Si Se Puede!) Hey, I'm just honing up my spanglish for the big "Bilingual-Commingle of 2004" ~ "Voten para John Kerry y John Edwards en 2004!" ~

Graciela Cisneros, 9/18/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

On Friday, September 17, 2004 . . . Chris Schneider wrote:

How about a national reunion on September 8, 2005 in Delano – the forty year anniversary of the Great Delano Strike?

what a wonderful idea. the 40th anniversary at the 40 acres. or some other appropriate place.

anyone else intrigued by the idea? gc

Susan Drake, 9/18/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Cool idea. Anybody know if 40 Acres still belongs to NFWSC? I couldn't get an answer about whether Service Center still exists when I emailed La Paz.

Susan

Fred Hirsch, 9/19/04

RE: Red-baiting and the AFL-CIA

Jose,

The fellow from the Meatcutters was Abe Feinglass. He did his best to confront the issues of AIFLD inside the AFL-CIO. He was a brilliant and compassionate man who was located in Chicago but had worked in the Furriers Union in New York, one of the unions, I think, thrown out of the CIO by redbaiters in 1949. Arthur Goldberg held kangaroo court hearings which got rid of the last of those left leaning unions - they totalled 11 unions and about a million members. That cleavage of the left from the CIO cemented the ability of the AFL and CIO to come together in 1955 (the marriage broker was Arthur Goldberg). It also meant that the promised drive to organize the South was headed off at the pass - a drive which would have altered our history and empowered the trade union movement to be much more than it is today. Then in 1961 Arthur Goldberg played a role in founding the collaboration between Corporate America and the AFL-CIO in putting together the AIFLD. That fine liberal, Goldberg then collected his rewards on both the Supreme Court and as Ambassador to the U.N.

Luis Figueroa accused AIFLD of "fourteen years of treason" in Chile.

Robert O'Neill sent a letter to his upper echelon handlers in D.C. pleading to that the trade unionists they sent from Chile for what turned out to be "agency" orientation, be able to visit with the Farmworkers in Delano and with Cesar. I don't know how many, or if any, Chileans came through that route.

I do know that in 1967 and 1968 we saw delegations of South Vietnamese "trade unionists," under the leadership of a man named Buu, coming through and eating at Filipino Hall. They were probably sent by the Asian American Free Labor Institute, one of the four counterparts of AIFLD.

I had a session with Cesar on John Street in Salinas in 1974 to show him the letter from Robert O'Neill (Known to Hortencia Allende, widow of the President, as "the number one" US intelligence operative in Chile. We talked about the issue at some length and I have no idea if he acted on the information. He had to carefully consider his relationship to George Meany and the AFL CIO.

Fred Hirsch Delano 67-68

Hope Lopez Fierro, 9/19/04

RE: Obstacles

Not one to pontificate, I'll be brief with my entry

The growers.

Once upon a time this group may have been titled 'farmers', but during the Chavista Daze these 'farmers' were multinational corporations now known as 'agribusiness'.

George Ballis can provide expert info on this issue.

Being money fat and sassy, it was hard for these psuedo agriculturors to bend to the likes of Cesar Chavez.

Farmworkers were non-persons, the Filipinos were titled 'monkeys,' the Mexicans were a bunch of 'spiks, illiterate borrachos, liars and traitors'. The growers didn't want to lower themselves to sitting down and discussing wages and conditions with a bunch of monkeys and borrachos. The farmworker's group was not acknowledged as a Union, it was easier to title them, at best - an organizing committee, at worst - agitators, and communists. With the growers it was a matter of super inflated ego. The farm workers were "una pulga en el culo de los rancheros", annoying as hell.

That was last century. Has anything changed this century? No.

The farmworkers.

Again I will point to George Ballis, one of his first pictorial books was titled "YA BASTA" and this says it all for the campesinos. They had had more than enough of abuse in the hands of the rancheros, los contratistas, even the government - starting with the Big Ripoff of Los Braceros.

Were the farm workers an obstacle to Cesar? I don't think so.

Farm workers were so fed up that, as I have pointed out time and again, they were ready to tackle Cesar, pin him down and get him to talk to the workers in their fields and work place about signing up.

Alberto mentioned DIGNITY, Amen. Brother.

Let me count the ways, of how many times I observed a campesino accept his Huelga/Union card and I could see the transition from el pobrecito campesino to El Gran Super Chavista. I'm sure many of you witnessed the same transition.

The Huelga card was actually a little yellow card was graced with the Huelga eagle, the worker's name, his Social Sec. number, and signed by Cesar Chavez- Director and Larry Itliong, Assistant Director. This little yellow card had little slots that were stamped with the black Huelga eagle to indicate that union dues had been paid. This little yellow was comparable to steroids.

I still have my little yellow Chavista card.

Hope Lopez – Viva la Causa!

Hugh “Hawkeye” Tague, 9/19/04

RE: Reunions

A reunion next September in Delano sounds great! In the meantime, anybody who finds themselves in Eastern PA/ Western Jersey, please look me up. We only have one kid at home now in our 4 bedroom house with swimming pool in the backyard. Being self employed, I have a flexible schedule.

Linda says everyone is invited except those of you who made the collect obscene phone calls. Hear that Jardinero?

* * * *

Hawkeye 1971-1976

Alberto Escalante, 9/20/04

RE: “Little Yellow Huelga Cards”

Hermanas y Hermanos,

Hearing Sister Hope Lopez talk about the workers and their "Little Yellow dues revocation cards" was a glimpse back to a time when, for the majority of farm workers, Cesar stood as a beacon of hope and deliverance from the despair and hardships of a life rife with poor wages, a workplace without adequate sanitary facilities, and more often than not the complete lack of any drinking water except for possibly the same water that was used for irrigation. Who would have guessed back in 1965 that such a normally innocuous subject as drinking water for the workers would some day develop into a a tragedy of incomparable measure? But now with the revelation that the same water that was used primarily for irrigation, was also used by the thirsty farmworkers who drank it to get some relief from the torrid Central Valley sun. This seeming refreshing drink of water is now the prime suspect for a myriad of health issues, the greatest of them being the huge increases in the reported incidents of various cancers and other deadly illnesses that have risen dramatically. The pollution & poisoning of the water table & soil are two prime suspects of how the insidiously evil carcinogens have essentially turned the entire Central Valley into a huge ticking time bomb of death. But, back then a more carefree, laissez-faire attitude prevailed. That would all change with the release of reports like those from Dr. Marion Moses, who issued a stern warning that even more deadly, worse case scenarios would surely emerge unless there was a dramatic & strict adherence to safer working conditions. And, yes, clean water, free from

carcinogens and pesticides, was to be used by the workers instead of returning to the practice of using water that had been taken from cisterns out in the vineyards or fields, water more likely than not saturated with poison and cancer causing agents such as those reported By Dr. Moses in the following excerpt: "About a third of the pesticides being used are carcinogens, cancer-causing substances," says Dr. Marion Moses, a San Francisco physician active with farm workers groups and a member of the pesticide advisory committee of the Environmental Protection Agency. "Farm workers and their children handle foliage that's been treated with these cancer-causing pesticides every day. And what we're saying is, that's unacceptable." Dr. Moses who was a consultant to United Farm Workers president Cesar Chavez, whose union boycotted table grapes to seek a ban on five chemicals, Phosdrin among them. The others are Captan, Dinoseb, Methyl Bromide and Parathion. Those chemicals, the union says, are responsible for numerous birth defects among farm worker children in California, and cancer among children of farm workers in two Central Valley towns - Earlimart and McFarland (towns known as "Cancer Cluster" areas). The issue of clean drinking water therefore would lead to an open a dialog as to the need for the implementation of health and safety practices and protections. Things that only a strong Union contract would guarantee. All that and more was contained in that "Little yellow card" which would later become a full color Polaroid photo ID with a head shot photo of the worker in front of a bright red background. Little Susie Chavez was assigned to drive the blue and silver gray Ford Van from locale taking photo ID's that had the person's social security number (alleged, anyway....) printed on it. These cards were a great way to get people to come into the office. Once there we could get their name and information on where they worked, what the conditions were etc. I wonder what it's like now? Especially after the "Erin Brockavich" movie which showed the American public (and the world) just how devastating these poisons can be. I wonder if the folks in Hollywood have considered a movie on Cesar's life. Hmmm, who'd play Cesar? So, just remember to drink bottled water, and Vote for John Kerry-John Edwards in 2004!

Yours in Struggle,

Alberto Escalante

Susan Drake, 9/20/04

RE: movie on Cesar

Robert Blake was at Jim's and my house, meeting with Cesar some time between '68-'71, trying to convince Cesar to let him play Cesar. Dunno if there was a script or producer ready. Blake, I could see that day, was too cocky to play Cesar except in Cesar's rare but cockiest moments. I also heard that Luis Valdez was asked to do a movie script but that the Chavez "family" (as if they all think alike!?) didn't care for Luis' script. Maybe one of the family can shed light on or squelch that *chisme*.

Susan Drake (1962-73)

Yolanda Serna, 9/20/04

Hola Hermanos y hermanas,

I don't know you but I feel as though I do.

I am a cousin to Susie Chavez, and I remember those days when she traveled around working for the Union. I am also a fellow organizer I grew up in el movimeinto alli en Delano, cuando todo estaba comenzando

Mi Mama era una Huelguista de Digiorgio.

Yo era una nina campesina fui a Huelga school con los Chaves, Huertas, Terronez, Murguia, Bustos, y los demas famililas Huelguistas.

Ahora soy una mujer Organizadora para la AFL-CIO DEL REGION OESTE, tambien trabaje para la Union de campesinos y para la Union de Hoteleros. Ahora estoy trabajando en Las Cruces, New Mexico en la campana politica para Kerry. Estoy tratando de sacar el voto de los miembros sindicalizados.

Nomas quierria decirte que me a gustado leer todo lo que has escrito. Porque cuando leo tus recuerdos yo me acuerdo de todas las cosas que si han cambiado, para nosotros latinos gente campesino.

De los dias de las juntas en el filipino hall, cuando todos comiamos juntos, nos vestillan de ropa donado y cuando tuvimos la primera clinica in woodville, y tambien cuando Kennedy llego a los cuarenta acres.

Yo se que nuestra Union si llego a lograr muchas cosas para nosotros, y mas bien la dignidad que no se puede medir.

I want to thank you and the many volunteers who were all apart of the movement during the early days through the many challenges, sacrifices, and obstacles that presented themselves.

I also want to say that for those of us who came up right behind you we are proud to say that you were our teachers, and role models.

Que viva todos los que luchan por Justicia!
Solidaridad pa siempre, Que Viva nuestra Union!
In Solidarity,

Yolanda Serna

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/20/04

RE: "Little Yellow Huelga Cards"

Escalante:

The canals used to be our swimming pools. After a long hard day at work, we'd trot down with our towels to swim in the canal in Woodville. I was afraid of the rushing water and the sides of the canals were pretty slimy so I rarely ventured in. One by one, my sister-in-law and her sisters passed away from cancer and don't have any doubt it was due to pesticides from the canals as well as from working out in the fields. What did we know back then. We may have shunned drinking dirty water but it wouldn't have occurred to us not to drink clear water. Also, most of the housing was near land used for harvesting so you can imagine the condition of the soil and the pesticides leaking into our drinking water,

What obstacles did Cesar face with farm workers. We had to be educated about what we couldn't see. Back in my day DDT was still being used. Thank goodness Cesar didn't wait for "our eyes to open"; he had us see with our eye shut because he had the information that was being hidden from us. The obstacle was getting us all to quickly understand what was happening to us in the fields before we died out there. The growers had us where they wanted us. My brother used to be a crop sprayer and, believe me, today OSHA would come and shut that company down. By the way, I sure wish the public would get behind the farm workers now the way it does with the Viet Nam vets and agent orange. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

p.s. Thank you Marion Moses for you dedication in helping farm workers. You are one tough, tireless woman.

Alberto Escalante, 9/21/04

RE: A brave woman and her story!

Hola Hermana Yolanda Serna,

Leyendo tu historia era como oir un corrido de "Una Mujer Valiente!" Y quizas tambien puedo decir que era una cancion que vino de tu corazon para darnos una manera a revivir esos tiempos de antes al mismo tiempo enseñándonos que tu sigues caminando adelante! Como dicimos a veces cuando vemos una mujer luchadora como usted "You Go Girl!" o "Da le gas, Hermana!" Tu email me hiso el corazon suenar como si estaba marcando tiempo con las palabras que estabas escribiendo en tu mensaje. Siegele con el buen trabajo que estas haciendo sabiendo que you tengo

todo la confianza que vas a salir victoriosa con todo lo que estas haciendo para el pueblo Mexicano. Siega adelante, Yolanda! Y no te dejas de nada o nadien!

Tu mensaje me dio mucho gusto!

Alberto Escalante ~~ Voten para Kerry-Edwards en 2004! ~~ Ya no nos hecha mentieras, Bush!

-----ingles-----

Hello Sister Yolanda Serna,

Reading your store was like hearing the ballad "Of a Valiant Woman!" Or perhaps I can also say that it was like a song from your heart to help us relive some good times from the past while at the same time letting us know that you're still moving ahead. Sometimes when I see a woman as dedicated to the cause as you I'll say "You Go Girl!" or "Pedal to The Metal, Sister!" Your email made my heart beat like it was keeping time with what you were writing about! Keep up[with the good works you're doing for our people. Keep on moving forward, Yolanda! And don't let anyone or anything keep you down!

Your story gave me much joy!

Alberto Escalante ~~ Vote for Kerry-Edwards in 2004! ~~ No more Bush-- -t!

Roberto Bustos, 9/21/04

RE: UFW on History Detectives

hola, I only caught the last part of it! I didn't know that the Virgin de Guadalupe banner, the one we took to Sacramento was lost? then it was found, and that Marshall Ganz verify it, as been the original? how did it get lost? who reported it lost? who had it last? like I said only, got to see the last part of it. I am trying to get a copy, but having a hard time with it. yeah, any body else can shed light on this, Marshall? Roberto Bustos 1965-1972

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/21/04

RE: Pesticide Drifts

To All:

Pesticide drifts: A new term(?) for an old problem. There is so much to be done still to help farm workers. Maybe the world will get the "drift" when they are literally caught up in one. Are there really so few of us willing to speak up for farm workers? sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

[Reprint of article, "Drifting into danger," *The Fresno Bee*, Sept. 20, 2004]

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/22/04

RE: How Cesar Did It

These are some of my thoughts re: How Cesar did it. Kathy Murguia

From my perspective, the personality characteristics Cesar brought to his passion for organizing created a sense of urgency for everyone he came in contact with regarding his plan to build a farmworker movement. To this end he was a calculating thinker who could quickly assess and recall in detail what assets another brought to this goal. It's been mentioned before, that Cesar believed the NFWA was not ready to be a union in 1965. The goal of organizing farmworkers across the state was only beginning. At this time, while having a focus of concentration re: the growth of the NFWA, he was both flexible and adaptable to the practical realities of the circumstances in Delano,

Cesar was able to inspire others to respond to the values **they held**, be it church, union, student, folks, or those who were part of a political, civil rights, or chicano constituency. On a personal level, he joined their aspirations and values to the cause of farmworkers. He had brilliant help with all this, who learned the skill of organizing eg, keeping things focused and practical with

concrete organizing goals, This was true even before Crosby's SAMS and Drucker's MBO's. How many, how much and how long along with who did what- formed the basic information to be concerned with. Marshall talks about the Five Smooth Stones that formed the environment for UFWOC to take off. The stones included all the constituencies impacting the lives of farmworkers. Cesar was a catalyst in all this or as LeRoy might say the founder that held it together in those early years. Invoking "Cesar said" carried both a sense of urgency to the message and credibility to the messenger. We all used it to accomplish what we believed needed to be done.

This then formed the basis for the "mechanism" that took on the growers and relentlessly reached out confronting their power base in the political, economic, social and religious arenas. There was no where the growers could rest quietly, exercising their influence without the Viva Swells.

For the farmworkers, as Alberto mentioned, hope was instilled, hope that it was only a matter of time that their lives and future opportunities for their kids would improve. It was infectious. Farmworkers began organizing themselves through what they read, what they saw and their own successes. The Delano Strike had been transformed into a movement that by 1970 embodied the good will of millions, and this included farmworkers, some growers, labor leaders etc., etc. etc.

These are my thoughts on how Cesar did it. He was a brilliant, passionate organizer who had a great deal of help from his friends.

I'm not certain how Cesar interpreted all this? Kathy Murguia 1965-1983

Graciela Cisneros, 9/22/04

RE: 40-40

for the last few days a group of us have been carrying on a side conversation on a national reunion also referred to as the 40-40.

I would like to stress not exactly sure how to pull this off but it seems like a date is the first thing. so I propose the date of Sat. Sept 10, an afternoon potluck and bring your own name tag event in Delano.

Roberto has come up with some great information

Hola, Grace, as per your request, there are two airports nearest to Delano one is Bakersfield around 30 miles to the north and Fresno about 75 miles to the south. also for your information we now have a Cesar Chavez High School with a big auditorium and huge outdoor field, as well as the other parks and the Cesar Chavez Park. we also have 3 additional chain hotels in the area. So yes Delano is big enough to host a reunion, whenever we decide to do it. gracias Roberto Bustos 1965-1972 y todavia.

I guess the next step is deciding a location. I don't imagine more than a hundred or so but I could be mistaken.

It would be good if a location could be decided before this listserve ends.

grace

Hugh "Hawkeye" Tague, 9/22/04

RE: FLORIDA JAILS OR HABEOUS WHO?

In '72-'73 we were trying to organize the sugar cane and vegetable industries in the Lake Okeechobee Region of Florida. The cops were locking us up for such heinous crimes as "trespassing in town after repeated warnings" "trespassing on company property" (farm worker housing) "inciting to riot" (distributing leaflets). Treatment differed considerably depending upon whether you were in Palm Beach County or Hendry County. Palm Beach County was somewhat civilized because it included the coastal towns of Palm Beach and West Palm Beach. Hendry County was like Mississippi. The city of Belle Glade (which is now the AIDS capital of the South) had its own crowded jail.

We were on file with all of the police departments because Florida State law required all union organizers (any union) to be mugged and finger printed. The cops liked to lock us up on Friday because you didn't see the judge until Monday morning. I was in jail one weekend when I annoyed the turnkey so much by talking to the farmworkers in the other cells about the Union (they were in for public intoxication or something) that he wouldn't give me any water. Well, it gets pretty hot in Belle Glade in August and I was drinking out of the toilet by Sunday afternoon. Of course, I cleaned it as best as I could first.

Eliseo figured that things were getting pretty rough and we better get some publicity before one of us is found in the bottom of a canal or something EM asked me to take a young reporter, John, from the PALM BEACH POST on a tour of the cane camps. I wasn't driving yet, because I hadn't gotten my eyes straight (those of you who know me think that I still haven't). We used his car to go to a camp in Hendry County near the town of Harlem. I knew the cops would rough us up and mess up his car. They didn't disappoint me. John was shocked. He acted like a violated maiden, especially when they wouldn't give him his phone call. "What phone call, boy".

He wrote a helluva story! It became quite a series on farm worker conditions in the area. A lot of other papers and even television reporters picked up the story as an attack on the press Things weren't so bad after that.

P>S> I was no stranger to jail. I never did time, but I had been getting locked up in my Philly neighborhood for years. The cops locked up us innocent little darlings for hanging on the corner or being in the park. They would hold us until 1:00 or 2:00 A.M. and let us make it home through several gang turfs.

I was thinking the other day that the '90's was the only decade since the '50's that I hadn't been to jail. I must be getting conservative.

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 9/22/04

RE: How Cesar Did It

Yes, yes, Kathy!! I've tried to write on this, but kept deleting my own thoughts because I couldn't seem to get them to say what *you* so very well said.

"Cesar was able to inspire others to respond to the values they held, be it church, union, student, folks, or those who were part of a political, civil rights, or chicano constituency."

I was motivated by the social justice message that I was taught as a Catholic and was emphasized particularly after Vatican II. But Cesar's brilliance was that any motive that supported La Cause had a place under the UFW umbrella - at least during my time since clearly things eventually went awry.

Thank you for your always thoughtful contributions, Kathy. I've been moved by so many of the posts that people have written that synthesized and explained in ways that truly do justice to the Documentation Project.

Jackie Davis
1971-1974

Alberto Escalante, 9/22/04

RE: How I spent my Vacation....

Hermana Abby,

Reading your recollection of your life as a young girl growing up in the Valley, I couldn't help but think..."Wow, swimming in the canals and cooling off in the cold canal water sure sounds rather bucolic and almost like a "Norman Rockwell" painting of the American Dream. But no, unknown to us our childhood wasn't so much a dream as a deadly nightmare of poison fumes and toxic workplaces. Where even the water could harbor that hidden carcinogenic chemical or agent that would come back in our later years & surface as a deadly cancer or some other horrible situation. What a "Bright Future", no? Worse yet, are the cases where the genes of horribly disfiguring

agents are passed onto our offspring and then to their children as well! I, too, can remember the "happy days" spent eating burritos out under a shady tree after a whole morning (usually from 6:00 am or so) picking nuez (walnuts) or chabacan o ciruela, jitomates, fresas o ejotes. I was never lucky enough to pick grapes..... (Big grin!) because we lived on the Pacific Coast. Near the ocean...but it was all still because of agriculture. We were fortunate enough to own our own home only because my dad was employed full time at a lemon packing house where he was a foreman, and my blessed mom would struggle to make ends meet. I swear Mexican women are truly financial whiz's!! How they can make so little money go so far I'll never be able to comprehend but our folks did it, didn't they. And boy we had a lot of love in our house. That's one thing about a Mexican household. Or that's the way it used to be when the younger ones still respected the older generation. Somehow I feel we are starting to become too "Anglocized", and we as a people are losing our way. I hear kids saying the "F" word to their mother, and read where Mexican kids have beat up on their parents... That's way, way bad. Like I said we may not have had all the money in the world but I can say with all honesty... We sure had all the love we needed! As far as money well our vacations were just a "Little Bit" different than what the "gabas" experienced, I mean if we did go to Anaheim it wasn't to go to Disneyland... although we did go there, too. No it was to work at some guys orange grove stacking field boxes. The actual picking was done by some men from the labor camp. Remember, this was in 1964 or so & the UFW was still only something that you folks around Delano knew about. Even though Cesar did hang out in Oxnard and Carpenteria a bit..... Anyway back to our "Cool" vacations, they were usually planned around a "contract" my parents made with some grower or rancher somewhere. Apricots and Plums (see chabacan o ciruela above) were harvested for 2 different farmers up in the San Jose, CA (Almaden) area and the walnuts we picked around Camarillo, CA. (off of the ground or onto a carpet that the mechanical shakers had) but the damn walnuts would still stain your hands terribly. A really dark brown stain, even through rubber gloves!! So there I'd be on opening day of school... in my brand new clothes and shoes that I'd bought with money I'd earned picking walnuts. But still, I'd have my hands stuck deep into my pockets, afraid to let my classmates see them least they see the stains & immediately know that I was a "dirty" farmworker! You see not just my hands were stained my consciousness was also tainted with the fear and revulsion that I'd be found out... "Outed" so to speak! Betrayed by my stained hands. And believe me I had tried everything to remove that dark brown walnut stain que me manchaba mis dedos. My parents would say better dirty hands than a dirty mind or dirty money, but I was too young yet to understand them. So I would stand transfixed in brand my new clothes, bought with the money I'd earned working as a fruit picker. Feeling ashamed of how I'd earned my new clothes while my classmates had been out lying in the sand getting a tan and just hanging out all summer. Only later would I learn to comprehend the wisdom and lessons my parents had given me. That any work is good work. And working with ones hands in the fields is better than not working at all, just being a "Flojo" Later I was proud to know that I had been taught how to work, and work hard by parents who had loved me enough to even guide me through my teenage years when my friends parents would just tell them to get lost all day because they didn't have time for them. I don't remember of any time that my parents didn't have time for me or my other 9 siblings (8 boys and 2 girls). Looking back at my childhood, I can now see that I was very lucky to have had such a wonderful youth, even if my fingers and hands sometimes were stained with the brown stains from the husks of the walnuts I'd picked earning money to buy my school clothes. Jeez I didn't even think about the child labor aspect! After all I was 14 years old. And back then I thought that I was pretty darn old.

Hasta luego, tu amigo siempre....

Alberto

Joaquin Murguia, 9/22/04 (1)

RE: HOW DID CESAR CHAVEZ DO IT?

LeRoy,

I believe that the first obstacle was overcome simply because of the effectiveness of the boycott. All businessmen are in business to sell their product and make money.

When the union tapped into the social consciousness of the late 60's and early 70's with an effective boycott, agribusiness had to respond to the threat to their bottom line. We have to remember that at that time, large corporations such as Southern Pacific and Tenneco were part of the agribusiness landscape.

While their size afforded them the opportunity to hold off against the union, in the end they had to be responsive to their stockholders who invest for one purpose and one purpose only, profit. With profits falling and eventually turning into losses, shareholders would have demanded some action be taken to reverse the trend.

The easiest way was to end their battle with the union, receive good press from signing the contract and then benefit from the "Pass the Word, Buy the Bird" campaign.

These large corporations must have taken a pretty big hit as most if not all have disappeared from the agribusiness landscape. With the exception of Sun World International, most of the farms in the Coachella Valley are now owned by family business and closely held family corporations.

Given that change, if the Union were to be able to mount an effective boycott today, which seems unlikely given the LACK of social consciousness in the U. S. today, the small closely held companies would succumb more quickly than their large corporate predecessors.

As for the farmworkers, I think the union again benefited from the social climate. Farmworkers could see on a daily basis on the news the changes that were occurring in the South and the gains made in the hard fought battles there. I think that perhaps a sense of hope and optimism grew from the headway made and the feeling of Si Se Puede began to grow. Cesar definitely made Si Se Puede a rallying cry.

There was a whole empowerment movement sweeping all segments of society from the blacks in the South, to the Black Panther movement in the West, to the brown power movement, to the sexual revolution, to women in the homes and workplace.

If anything the success had more to do with timing than the charisma of one individual, although as throughout history, an individual become the focal point.

Joaquin Murguia
Delano, San Francisco, La Paz 1967-1979

Joaquin Murguia, 9/22/04 (2)

RE: "Little Yellow Huelga Cards"

I've read with interest the comments about life on the farms and in the fields. Before I returned to live with my Dad in 1967, I lived with my uncle who also was a farmworker, though not migrant.

We lived on Rancho Sespe in Ventura County. While living there and other ranches in the Moorpark and Somis, I worked alongside my uncle during my summer vacations. At those times I stacked orange crates and marked our boxes, I picked oranges from the bottoms of trees while my uncle picked on the ladder. Sometimes my job consisted of just sitting on the hillside keeping an eye out for "La Migra."

After returning to live with my Dad, I would spend my summer vacations with my uncle. On those occasions I again worked in the orchards of Ventura County. One of the crews that I worked was the spray rig which was used to spray the orange trees to kill the morning glory. I don't recall what the chemical mixture was that was used, but I do recall that it was not unusual for us to spray each other with the liquid to cool off on the hot summer days. Eventually thirst would set in and the canteen would be dry so we would drink from the "clean, clear" water that ran from the irrigation stand pipes. I also worked on a tomato planting crew, sitting behind a Caterpillar covered from head to toe in dust with just a kerchief and goggles to keep the dust out of my eyes and lungs.

I learned how to drive equipment and trucks. By the time I was 10, I had was already proficient at driving an old Dodge pickup, a Caterpillar D-4 and a John Deere tractor known as a "Johnny Popper" for the noise it made.

My earliest recollections include playing in the dirt while my biological mother picked tomatoes, picking plums in the central valley and also having my left arm swollen from wasp stings from picking a hornets nest that looked like a bunch of grapes hanging in the vines.

I never felt ashamed that I was a farm worker and lived in a labor camp. There were lots of kids in the camp and we all attended the local schools. Perhaps I was just fortunate that I was not treated differently from the other kids. That really didn't occur until I moved to La Paz and began attending school in Tehachapi. What I experienced then had more to do with my involvement with the Union than my farmworker background.

Joaquin Murguia
Delano, San Francisco, La Paz 1967-1979

Hope Lopez Fierro, 9/22/04

RE: What Cesar saw

Abby, Alberto & Joaquin:

All of you speak of your experiences as children, and undoubtedly this has left an impression on you. Yeah it may have seemed as a picnic at times, until you got stung by the bees, got the runs with the water, scared shitless by those damned frogs, and not to mention the cancerous freckles.

Now put yourselves in the place of hundreds of farm workers who had to deal with the conditions, weather, pesticides, slipped discs, humiliations, and so on ad nauseum on a daily basis.

Now add four or five kids who are hungry, barefooted, cold and they are your total responsibility, add a thick accent to communicate your needs, and more humiliations, year after year.

Take abuse of the most humiliating kind, work all day and get cheated or not paid @ all,

Yes. Now you are ready to throw in the hoe, the grape knife, la escalera vieja, y gritar "YA BASTA."

This is what Cesar saw. This is what brought tears to his eyes. This is what broke his heart. This was the Birth of La Causa. This was the Birth of Cesar's life time commitment.

And yours. And mine.

Hope Lopez, been there, done that

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/23/04

RE: What Cesar saw

Yep, Hope,

That is what Cesar saw and I am glad because he did for us what no one had ever done before. To be honest with you all the attempts made before in farm worker organizing history meant nothing to us. You know los campesinos live from day to day, in the present and not looking to far into the future either. Maybe just payday. Cesar was ONE OF US which went a long way in making us accept his idea for a union. Let me tell you my father was not a follower yet when Cesar spoke he knew Cesar was putting himself on the line for a long fight. He was not asking of us what he was not willing to do himself. Y tambien toda su familia asi como nosotros. Cesar was the best thing that ever happened to my family because our thoughts were nevrer on forming a union but we sure as hell knew something was not right between esos rancheros malditos and us. I'm sure glad Cesar was thinking about it for us and was working hard at when he came across us out there en el fil otherwise todavia nos tuviera alia piscando uvas por una miseria.

You're right when you list all the ugliness farm workers deal with but every family has their own stories or sorrows to share. All are important and make us who we are. I know though that I had

it better than my abuelos and now my kids are a hell of a lot better than I ever was. Mine may not have been as bad a life as others (of which I am selfishly glad) but, hey, to me it was no fun and games either. I'm just glad I haven't gotten cancer, yet. The sad thing is there is still so much that need to get done in the year 2004. La union no se a desaparecido tampoco. Todavia falta mucho que hacer. abrazos, mujer, sin mas/ abby/ r/d/p

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/24/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR DO IT?

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

My question, "How Did Cesar Do It", did not attract many responses but I do appreciate the insightful and thoughtful comments of those who did respond.

In my view, the answers to this question are central to understanding Cesar Chavez and his farmworker movement. I am also of the opinion that future generations will look to this question as the first one to be answered.

Here are some of my comments:

Timing is everything. It is an historical accident (some might call it providential) that Cesar found himself in a society caught up in the whirlwinds of social change. It was an age of movements: civil rights, anti-war and peace, anti-nuclear, student free speech, beatnik generation, early beginnings of the women's movement, Vatican Council II, and the increasing popularity of community organizing.

But whether by accident or providence, it fell to Cesar to tap into the idealism and activism of these movements to help build his own farmworker movement.

Cesar Chavez was called, or at least he felt called. (the net result is the same) to respond to the felt need of the plight of farmworkers. A calling requires one to set aside all else for the sake of a cause. Such a calling requires personal sacrifice.

In Cesar's case, this meant that he, Helen and their children, would have to live in voluntary poverty so that he would be free to devote his life to build his farmworker movement

In my view, It is impossible to overestimate the importance of Cesar's commitment to voluntary poverty. (My strong bias may be related to the fact that I became a follower because of his commitment to voluntary poverty.)

Living in voluntary poverty: (1) showed he was willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of his cause; (2) made him look authentic (and therefore, compelling) because such a life-style flew in the face of the lives lived by conventional labor bosses/ leaders; (3) attracted people to him because neither he, nor his cause, was about making money; (4) forced his followers to live for the sake of the cause, not for the sake of making money; (5) instilled trust in farmworkers who saw their dues being used for the sake of the cause, not to personally enrich Cesar; (6) forced the farmworker movement to appeal to others for funds and goods to survive - a powerful organizing tool; and (7) invokes religious tradition because a person who sacrifices the goods of the world to work for others, is thought to be called by God for a higher purpose. Cesar's voluntary poverty resonated with faith-based people who came from that tradition.

Finally, Cesar's public commitment to the use of non-violence in his fight against agribusiness made it possible for striking farmworkers and outside volunteers to come to Delano without fear of being killed on the picket line. Ultimately, this commitment to non-violence forced the discovery of the boycott, which brought about union recognition.

If anyone has comments, I am pleased to receive them.

Ellen Eggers, 9/25/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR DO IT?

Hi LeRoy...I thought everything you said about the voluntary poverty was exactly right. My mother always agreed with that idea...that Cesar attracted people to the movement precisely for that reason. In fact, about 30 yrs ago, my mom sent me a quote from Albert Einstein, that she thought applied to Cesar (I agree, and have had it posted on my refrigerator door ever since!) Here it is:

"I am absolutely convinced that no wealth in the world can help humanity forward, even in the hands of the most devoted worker in this cause. The example of great and pure individuals is the only thing that can lead us to noble thoughts and deeds. Money only appeals to selfishness and irresistibly invites abuse."

Maria Fuentes, 9/25/04

RE: How did Cesar do it?

Hola a todos,

My parents along with my mother's family and my brothers and I all worked as farm workers. My mother and her family were migrants in various parts of northern and central California in the late 40's and my father worked in the Salinas area. My brothers and I worked with my mother picking - topping onions and other type of work in Bakersfield during those hot summers in the '60's.

My dad has always held a deep admiration and respect for Cesar Chavez. My dad and my grandfather, my mother's father, were active in el CSO in Bakersfield. He is proud that Cesar Chavez was in our home for a CSO meeting. My dad always defended Cesar when he was organizing the UFW in Kern County in the 60's and 70's. When people would say that Cesar was a Communist, lived in a mansion etc. My father would say "No. Cesar Chavez is a professional organizer." (period)

When I left Bakersfield alone at age 19, to go to Delano on my way to join the boycott in LA no one - not my parents or grandparents tried to discourage or stop me from leaving. (If you knew my family and how I was sheltered you would be amazed.) They knew I was following one person - for whom they had trust and respect - for one cause - for which they supported their daughter/granddaughter working for.

Of course I knew Cesar much less than most of you on this listserve, but to me to answer LeRoy's question, one needs to think about it from many vantage points. I agree with my dad. I think Cesar was above all an organizer - and one of the best in the history of Mexicanos/Chicanos in California. He was a true leader. As a true leader, he was focused on the goal - the future, those he was serving and trying to organize. Most from my community that worked with him, who followed him, learned from him -- knew Cesar as the trusted leader who fought for their rights and dignity. What he said resonated and represented our needs, wants, hopes. His words, his voice that I heard so many times from a distance in person, on video, movies, always has the same strong message of the uncompromising voice for my people.

As has been so beautifully expressed, Cesar gave us dignity. That will never be taken away. He gave us the power to believe in what had seldom happened, and since has happened time and time again - our constitutional rights, previously denied - upheld! And yes there is much more to do here - but I believe since the farm worker movement our rights have been defended on many fronts much more than previously in our history in the US. We thank Cesar for his sacrifice and dedication. By sacrificing he quietly modeled for us that yes this is all worth living and dying for and in the end your effort will bear fruit.

My children and their children and beyond will always have the legacy. As my 5 year old granddaughter is learning the words of "De Colores" she will understand more and more in years to come. She'll continue to learn how thousands and thousands of farm workers, Mexicanos, Chicanos, Civil and Human Rights Activist have sung and prayed this song together in unity and in demand of our rights and dignity....what Cesar did for my community is endless.

I know that Cesar clearly communicated the message of organizing, unity -- fighting for our rights together and peacefully to hundreds, then thousands of farm workers...one by one, ten by ten and

more. Did he have teachers that taught him the methods, systems of organizing? Yes, we know he did. But I believe it worked because he gave and taught the message, from his heart. Honestly, sincerely speaking for justice and fairness. When I think of how as a grade school student I worked from before the sun was out until the middle of the afternoon chopping onions in the dirt wearing heavy clothing and rubber gloves, when I think of my friend who attended 14 schools - starting late and leaving early in the school year - because he and his family were migrant farm workers, and my mother's family living in tents traveling, following the crops - when I think of this and much more, I know that Cesar's words were our words, his sacrifice was our sacrifice, his union was our union and his legacy is our legacy.

Cesar passed on his ideals to other farm workers while at the same time capturing what farm workers already knew, understood and were ready to fight for. Cesar organized them, organized us, together.

With all my respect, admiration and gratitude for your work, brothers and sisters, I send you my thoughts.

Maria Fuentes
LA Boycott, summer 1970

Lorraine Agtang (Mascarinas) Greer, 9/25/04 (1)

RE: HOW DID CESAR DO IT?

[LeRoy Chatfield wrote:]

"Cesar Chavez was called, or at least he felt called, (the net result is the same) to respond to the felt need of the plight of farm workers. A calling requires one to set aside all else for the sake of a cause. Such a calling requires personal sacrifice."

LeRoy,

I agree with your observation and comments of "How Did Cesar Do It" as a farm worker and later UFW volunteer I felt a calling to sacrifice my family to take the message to other farm workers. Listening to Cesar his speeches of the unjust treatment we were receiving as farmworkers in comparison to other workers in other industries angered me. Cesar would talk of the power we had as a group of people to change the injustice convinced me that I had a responsibility to join the movement to improve future work benefits for my family. I was committed to organizing workers without fear of personal harm from the growers, local law enforcement, Teamsters etc, because in my heart the work we were doing was for a higher purpose. There were days of Teamsters breaking into our home, brandishing hand guns out on deserted roads or making threats of physical harm and we said bring it on. I was not afraid of dying for our cause. One day my children would work in the fields (this was before I learned of the world outside Delano from the volunteers I can not thank you enough for the gift) like me and my parents. Knowing that with Cesar and UFW we could make life better by increasing wage levels, providing medical benefits, a retirement pension, and stop the use of deadly pesticides was my only choice.

Working with the movement I felt our cause was blessed even if the church did not recognize its' mission. The fact that volunteers were not receiving a wage for their work made them hermano's and hermana's en la lucha por justicia y dignidad para los campesinos. Money can corrupt and divide whether it would have happened with the UFW back in the 70's looking back I believe it would have affected the image of la causa to the public during the crucial time of development.

I admired Cesar and his family for their willingness to enter into voluntary poverty for la causa the whole family had to support what this decision would mean in the years to come. A commitment the family kept throughout Cesar's life and still today. Gracias. The Chavez family modeled the kind of sacrifice we would need to make with our own families. Helen was always there a pillar of strength for everyone to listen, counsel and scold when necessary.

Unknowing of the theory behind methods Cesar may have used in organizing volunteers, the community, and nation to support cause of the campesino it made sense to me as a farmworker

that we could not lose the battle. As Cesar would say "All we have is time". I felt personal dignity, respected as an individual, and empowered to control my own life.

And as timing is everything I feel blessed and give thanks that I was called to join Cesar and the UFW which changed my life's story. Thanks LeRoy for your commitment to gathering the historical lessons shared by the many people who dared to struggle.

Lorraine Agtang-Greer (Mascarinas)
1973-1977 Delano Grape Strike, Rodrigo Terronez Clinic, Agbayani Village, Farm Worker Elections

Lorraine Agtang (Mascarinas) Greer, 9/25/04 (2)

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Please add me to any planned reunion list. Holding the reunion at Forty Acres has my vote "Si Se Puede"

Gracias,

Lorraine Agtang-Greer
1973-1977 Delano Grape Strike, Rodrigo Terronez Clinic, Agbayani Village, Farm Worker Elections

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 9/25/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Is anyone coordinating the local reunion this year? Chris Schneider's suggestion about a 40-year reunion next year at the 40 acres is marvelous. I've started a list of those interested in a small reunion this year. Could we perhaps begin the conversation around the larger reunion in 2005! So, besides Wayne, Susan, Grace, Roberto Bustos, who else wants to be added to my list of possible reunion attendees?

Chris Schneider, 9/25/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Graciela, I suggested Delano next year for the forty year anniversary of the strike – someone else suggested the Forty Acres.

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 9/25/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Susan, the NFWSC is alive and well. Paul Chavez heads it up. He is based in La Paz * * * *
Barbara

Lester Silverman, 9/26/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Reunions are a fun idea, but what does anyone hope to accomplish.

Lester Los Angeles Boycott 1975-76

Graciela Cisneros, 9/26/04 (1)

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

for me it will be a picnic in the park, a celebration of life, family, friends.. connecting faces with our listserve group, - a closing ceremony for the listserve.

grace

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/26/04 (1)

RE: COMMENT ELLEN STARBIRD'S POSTING

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Ellen Starbird wrote: *He (Cesar) also had the unabated financial backing of the UAW and another big union (IAM? Steelworkers?) this financial backing ended late 70s while those union themselves came under attack. These unions had a social commitment in large measure driven by their Afro American memberships. -e*

For the sake of the historical record, I would like to fine tune Ellen's comment.

From 1962-1966, the NFWA did not receive any organized funding from the UAW, AFL-CIO, etc. At the end of 1966 when Walter Reuther (UAW) visited the strike in Delano he pledged \$5,000 a month UAW support. 1/2 to AWOC and 1/2 to NFWA. To my knowledge this was the first ongoing labor support Cesar received.

After the merger between NFWA and AWOC into UFWOC (this merger was engineered by Bill Kircher of the national AFL-CIO,) then some modest on[go]ing labor union financial support followed. It was not until 1973 (see Jack Quigley's essay) that serious financial support came from organized labor, and this was primarily for the purpose of paying strike benefits and the overhead of the UFW?organizing effort.

After 1973, I cannot say what the financial support of organized labor was vis a vis the UFW because I was no longer involved, and made no effort to keep track of the these kinds of UFW issues.

Thank you.

Marshall Ganz, 9/26/04 (1)

RE: COMMENT ELLEN STARBIRD'S POSTING

I think this seriously minimizes the significance of labor support, Leroy. As you know, the \$5000/month became \$10,000/month (which was "real money" in those days), but was supplemented in many, many on going ways, especially in boycott city after boycott city across the US and Canada. The competition between Reuther and Meany was one of the very helpful things that fueled the support. I don't have the figures of what all this added up to at my finger tips but it was the most significant source of ongoing financial, equipment, office space, printing and personnel support the union had. I'd think of the 1973 \$1.6 million more as a peak of support than as the first significant support. . . and rather than covering "overhead", this created the strike fund that made the 1973 strikes possible. They simply wouldn't have happened without it. It was one of Cesar's accomplishments to link the critical resources of organized labor to organization of farm workers themselves and to the support of the churches, liberals, and others that together produced the victories. In all the earlier farm worker organizing attempts since 1905, organized labor had been present, ethnic worker associations had played a role, and radical organizers with urban links had been involved, but never all in the same organization. Marshall

Alberto Escalante, 9/26/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR DO IT?

Sisters and Brothers,

First off, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our List Moderator, Brother Leroy Chatfield, for his faithful, diligent pursuit of the truth by asking for first hand knowledge from other people as well drawing from his own vast and varied experiences working for CEC, having been one of Cesar's first administrative assistants. So, in response to the question posed to us, "HOW DID CESAR DO IT?" I'd have to answer that personally speaking Cesar was probably the most altruistic, charismatic and dedicated person that I've had the privilege of knowing & working with. But, I have to preface my response by pointing out that Cesar had to overcome some incredible barriers just to be able to be in a position where his voice and message could be heard. At one time he was just another young Latino 'chuke from the barrio appropriately known as "Sal Si Puedes" San Jose, CA, where he had settled after he'd left the Navy & married his long time sweetheart Helen Fabela. And it was due in large part because of his marriage to this wonderful woman, his

soulmate Helen Chavez, that Cesar was able to have the eventual success that he would have. If he had married any other person I doubt that the story of Cesar Chavez would have grown much past the boundaries of the "Sal Si Puedes" barrio where in June of 1952 he would eventually meet Fred Ross, Sr. Fred Ross would become the catalyst that was needed to bring out many of Cesar's natural leadership skills. Fred would also teach/ show Cesar, and many thousands of others, many of these same organizational skills that he had acquired over the years, skills necessary so that Cesar could give his "suenos" or dreams the clarity and direction needed in order for him to understand and act on them using the skills he'd learned from Fred Ross, Sr. as well as abiding by his own natural instincts. But the bottom line was besides the fact that he was a naturally gifted organizer (probably the best Fred Ross would ever meet, according to Ross himself who would write in his diary the night he met Cesar "I think I've found the guy I was looking for...!") But, one of the most striking and germane comments that I've heard from practically everyone who knew him (not just Fred Ross, Sr.) was that "Cesar wanted to know how OTHERS would benefit from what he was doing, NOT how HE or his family would benefit!" To me that was (one of) the main reason(s) that people like myself would gladly endure practically any and everything in order to be able to work with him...because of his altruistic values and qualities. To me this was a welcome breath of fresh air from all of the other "gimme, gimme, gimme" leaders and politicians that there were out there. And, Cesar made it really clear from the very beginning that what we would be doing wasn't for our own material gains or profit, but for the benefit of the nameless, faceless minions of others who were out there essentially picking the food that fed us and kept us alive.....People who got up everyday and had to work in situations that would be deemed unfit and illegal had they been in any other type of trade or industry other than agriculture. These would be the end beneficiaries of all of our hard work and the hard work of so many other dedicated volunteers and staff members. Because if I were to die tomorrow I could go knowing that "I did one thing in my life for the benefit of someone else, other than myself." To me that's as much of an obit as I'll ever need.....

Yours in Struggle,

Alberto Escalante Yom Kippur 2004

Vote for John Kerry and John Edwards in 2004! Vote Democrat in 2004!

Graciela Cisneros, 9/26/04 (2)

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

It would be great to be able to have a reunion at the 40 acres but I have neither the time or energy to pull that off.

Early this week I wrote to Roberto asking him which parks he mentioned might be appropriate for the reunion on Sept. 10, 2005, I was thinking a park would be easier to pull off than the 40 acres, as I am into an easy – less stress mode.

I will be attending classes full time until summer Quarter 2005 so won't have much extra time this year but certainly enough time to think of a potluck dish to bring and name tag.

grace

Mary Mecartney, 9/26/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

FYI (after 11 "whereases" outlining the history) this is resolution adopted unanimously by the delegates

Resolution No. 12
HONORING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1965 DELANO GRAPE STRIKE
United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO
17th Constitutional Convention
August 28-29, 2004
Fresno, California

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the membership and leadership of the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO stands in cherished memory of the heroic deeds of the Delano grape strikers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we, the successors of those brave men, women and children, direct the farm workers' movement to mark the 40th anniversary of the Delano Grape Strike in September 2005 with ceremonies and observances befitting this historic milestone.

LeRoy Chatfield, 9/26/04 (2)

RE: MARSHALL GANZ MAKES GOOD POINTS

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

I believe Marshall is quite right to give more credit to organized labor for their financial support of the UFW than I did. This would be especially true for the CIO-type unions (UAW, Rubber Workers, Meat Cutters, etc.) in supporting the local UFW boycott organization. I know that in Los Angeles, I was constantly hitting up the UAW and the churches, Jewish organizations, liberal groups, too - which also serves to make Marshall's point. (Patty Park Proctor's essay about the Detroit boycott provides much information about, and gives credit to, the support she received from the UAW. She also recounts a cute story about Emil Mazey making her promise that the UAW Christmas donation to the boycotters would go to them, and not be sent on to the general fund at La Paz.)

In my defense, I suppose I was focussed more on those very early NFWA years (1962-1966), when going to the unions for money was, more or less, a waste of time. Students, professors, liberal groups, Protestant churches, Jewish groups, Joan Baez, Beverley Hills, Palo Alto, West L.A. and Tiburon-types was where the money was.

Marshall Ganz, 9/26/04 (2)

RE: MARSHALL GANZ MAKES GOOD POINTS

Leroy,

Since we're discussing matters of history, before the strike, in September, 1965, the NFWA accepted very little in the way of outside funding. And by December, 1965, organized labor was providing financial support in a very big way. So if we're talking about the first 12 weeks of the strike, I'd agree that much of the labor support did not go to the NFWA, but to AWOC. But AWOC was getting substantial support. I'd be curious what your sources are for the claim that "students, professors, etc. were 'where the money was'". It may be unwise to generalize from your particular fund raising experience in LA, although the Joan Baez concert you refer to was not until late 1966 or 1967, after the UAW and the AFL-CIO were already contributing major funding.

Marshall

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 9/26/04

RE: HOW DID CESAR DO IT?

AND...he attracted amazing leadership. In my tiny corner of the movement, I was originally "organized" by Margo Cowen in the tomato strike of San Ysidro Carlos and Linda LeGuerette were at that moment holding down the boycott end of things. As we continued our involvement and were exposed to the leadership directly around Cesar, we were truly awe-struck by the vision, the clarity, the single focus and energy of Delores, LeRoy, Marshall, Jim, and so many more. I was happy to do what they asked because the voice really did seem singular.

Jackie Davis
1971-1974

Doug Adair, 9/27/04

RE: Organizer or Saint?

In a message dated 9/24/04 . . . [LeRoy Chatfield] writes:

In my view, it is impossible to overestimate the importance of Cesar's commitment to voluntary poverty. (My strong bias may be related to the fact that I became a follower because of his commitment to voluntary poverty.)

I am unconvinced by LeRoy's argument about "voluntary poverty". The Chavezes certainly went through periods of (unvoluntary) poverty when Cesar was young. But in 1965, the Chavezes had a modest house to live in, and a car; putting them ahead of the significant portion of the farm worker community that lived in camps, in trailers, in cars, under the vines.... they had three meals on the table, the utilities paid, the kids in school, the kids not having to work to support the family. Compared to many (most) farm workers in the world, the Chavezes may have been a little better off. But any farm worker could visit the Chavez home and think, "He is one of us."

In rejecting the materialism of Marxism and Capitalism, Cesar and Helen accepted a modest life style, a lack of obsession with accumulating material things. This has been the the peasant ideal, the Christian ideal, for centuries. It certainly appealed to me. I was an enthusiastic supporter of the "\$5 a week" ideal because of the egalitarian basis on which we were building the organization, the sweeper of the office receiving the same as the exalted leader. But I had no interest in living in poverty for the sake of self punishment. That was something farm workers wanted to get away from...

I would go back to Maria Fuentes' observation that Cesar was, first and foremost, an organizer, a first rate organizer. He could have continued to organize within CSO, empowering the Mexican American community through political action and that kind of stuff. But the membership there, restaurant owners and teachers and labor contractors and insurance salesmen, were focused on joining the capitalist rat race. Serving that community was going to have minimum impact on correcting the injustices from which his parents and community had suffered.

His choice to leave CSO was not so he could live in voluntary poverty. It was so he could focus on organizing farm workers. Getting Helen to buy into this vision did not involve a promise of riches, but I don't think it involved a promise of poverty, either. And Gil Padilla left CSO with him, a critical partner in launching the project. Gilbert's vision may not have included as many votive candels or plaster statues of saints as Cesar's, but it was no less a commitment to fight for justice for farm workers.

Cathy Murguia noted:

"Cesar was able to inspire others to respond to the values they held, be it church, union, student, folks, or those who were part of a political, civil rights, or chicano constituency. On a personal level, he joined their aspirations and values to the cause of farmworkers."

Obviously, the voluntary poverty, the "sacrificios para la Causa", the suffering leader, all appealed tremendously to LeRoy, the ex-monk, and many others. Perhaps this is what Cesar stressed when dealing with Leroy. As a major creater of Cesar's and the union's public image (1966-1970), LeRoy chose to project the Movement as very Catholic, and Cesar as the sainted leader. The joke in People's Cafe was that LeRoy was the Union's Savanarola, sent by Opus Dei to steer the union away from the Commies and Protestants, and to stop the staff from having fun, enjoying the struggle...

I feel Cesar's strength as an organizer of farm workers was that he was "one of us". In the early years, he did not put himself up on a pedestal. He walked the barrios and met with workers, without a quadrilla of guards or official hangers-on. His proposal was that farm labor was a valued and essential profession, deserving respect and DIGNITY, as has been stressed, and that he and the union folk were there to serve that community and help it to organize itself. The vision included benefits, not voluntary poverty; improvements in life, a new relationship with the rest of society, not one of permanent submission and sacrificios. And farm workers responded.

I was tremendously moved by the religious and spiritual aspects of the community in Delano in 1965. But there were many, farm workers and volunteers alike, who were deeply suspicious of the Catholic Church. As a Jeffersonian (separation of Church and state) and Protestant, I felt it was a

mistake to create such a Catholic image of the movement. The Church had been preaching voluntary submission to poverty, sacrificios para la Causa, for centuries. There were plenty of farm workers who viewed the Church as part of the problem, part of the establishment, turning a blind eye on the suffering of the farm workers as long as they attended mass.

There was a feeling at the time of the first fast, that while Cesar was removing himself from the day to day labors of the union, LeRoy had seized control, a Catholic coup. Within the union, the objects of the fast seemed to be Epifanio Camacho, the most prominent Protestant within the union (true, he did have a slingshot); and Tony Orendain, the most vocal anti-clerical (who made no bones about his admiration for Emeliano Zapata and the Mexican Revolution). There was a spirited debate about violence going on at that time, nuances about property, about the right of self defense, about "tactics vs. ideology." The fast ended the internal debate, though not necessarily the violence (which in reality was very, very minimal and mostly counter-productive).

Cesar was a Catholic, a devout Catholic, and with a tremendous spiritual power about him. And as an organizer, he used that power to put together an amazing team, including LeRoy no less than Camacho. But the Catholicism projected in 1965, and at the time of the March in 1966, seemed to me more of the Catholic Worker variety, the focus on serving the poor, not the Pope; on serving the people, Catholic, Commie, Protestant, atheist, all welcome; on using that faith and power to organize and empower farm workers. And farm workers rallied to the cause because he was "one of us."

Doug Adair
El Malcriado, Delano, Texas, 1965-70

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/27/04 (1)

RE: MARSHALL GANZ MAKES GOOD POINTS

Marshall,

Donna Haber may want to weigh in on this one, but as I recall there were a lot of single checks and donations coming in from supporters like Bob Callagy, Dorothy Kaufman, and others associated with Citizens for Farm Labor, and other campus groups at Berkeley. I know many folks who started sending checks on a monthly basis to the NFWA. In the fall, while still working with Citizens, Joel Geier from the Independent Socialists (Hal and Ann Drapers), and Richard Boyden (SCAL) and myself began raising money for the NFWA. We manned a table on campus and sold buttons and bumper stickers, the magazine Farm Labor. We'd average several hundred dollars a week and I'd cash it in and send a money order to the Albany St. office. We thought AWOC was getting help from the Unions so all the money we raised went to the NFWA.

When I went to Delano in Jan. of "66", I worked at the Albany St. Office. My job was to send thank you letters for donations from individual supporters and other organizations, churches, Mexican-American Organizations, some unions etc. I recall at that time farmworkers were also sending in donations. Lupe once showed me a letter he had received from Cesar that I had typed thanking him for his donation.(CEC/kl) Small checks of \$10-\$20 etc. came in everyday along with some larger checks from organizations. I'd average 20-35 letters a day and there were many repeats. Jim Drake I believe kept the books on the donations. I can't recall when we started the \$5 stipend, but I believe we were able to do it because of these early sources of financial support.

Kathy Murguia (1965-1983)

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/27/04 (2)

RE: Union help and others

LeRoy stated:

"From 1962-1966, the NFWA did not receive any organized funding from the UAW, AFL-CIO, etc. At the end of 1966 when Walter Reuther (UAW) visited the strike in Delano he pledged \$5,000 a month UAW support. 1/2 to AWOC and 1/2 to NFWA. To my knowledge this was the first ongoing labor support Cesar received."

As I recall Reuther came at the end of 1965. In Levy's book Paul Schrade suggested to Reuther that he visit the strike. Reuther sent Roy, but at that point Cesar was "out of town". Later Walter Reuther sent Paul Schrade and Jack Conway a day before he was scheduled for his visit of both AWOC and the NFWA. There was a lively tension between the two at the time. Reuther was met by both at the airport and a march to the Glenwood office was suggested. (The Delano cops had said there'd be arrests if a march took place without a permit). Reuther grabbed one of the new NFWA plywood signs designed by Jim Holland and was off. Cesar in a later conversation told Reuther that he wasn't "getting a damned penny from unions". Green didn't have a number and later Reuther committed to the \$10,000 a month to be split between AWOC and the NFWA. Maybe this is when the \$5 a week started? Kathy

Patty Park (Proctor), 9/27/04

RE: COMMENT ELLEN STARBIRD'S POSTING

I was in Detroit in 1973 when the UAW made a significant monthly pledge to the UFW. I believe it was \$10,000 a month. Richard Chavez and I were invited to the UAW executive board meeting and Richard spoke I had been the liason with the UAW on the Detroit boycott and Emil Mazey, the Secretary Treasurer was the Executive Board Member who was took the lead for the UAW. He was profoundly committed to the UFW. This monthly contribution came when the UAW headquarters Solidarity House was still mortgaged to the Teamsters. Yes to the Teamsters. As some of you will remember after the UAW left the AFL-CIO there was a short partnership with the Teamsters. The UAW spent their money on efforts that mattered to their membership and other working people and I understood that during one particularly difficult and long auto strike they were short on cash and the mortgage of Solidarity House was the result. I certainly believe that without this significant contribution from the UAW in 1973 that it would have been much more difficult for the Union. -- that certainly was the way the announcement was received by Richard Chavez.

I also was a supporter in Canada and while Marshall, Jessica, Jerry and Juantia Brown and Hub Segur will know best my sense of it was that Labour support was critical.

Labour continues to support the UFW here -- each year for the past five they have had a Black Eagle award fundraising dinner in which they recognize contribution of people to the UFW here in Canada. The fundraising dinner was just held this past week. Also for all those former Toronto boycotters the UFCW now has six farmworker help centres open in south west Ontario and one in Quebec. Some of the workers from these centres were at the dinner along with three Mexican women who are worm harvesters who the UFCW is helping with health and safety complaints. Feels much like the Service Centres of the UFW.

More about Detroit and the UAW in my essay.

Patty (Proctor) Park

Andy Imutan, 9/27/04

RE: N.W. - UFW Reunion

Dear everyone,

What kind of reunion are you thinking about? Is it a reunion of those who were no longer in the union after 1973? Or is it for all who were in the union since 1965 and of those still with the union today, to include those who were pressured to leave the union by Cesar?

If it is a general reunion then I suggest we should touch base with La Paz and discuss the suggestion with the Union's present board and convince them of the reunion idea. I believe the best people to initiate such a project would be the union itself. I believe it is only appropriate and right that the Union heads the Reunion Project. It could be held on Sept. 8, 2005 which would be marked the 40th year anniversary of the strike in Delano either at the forty acres or at Paz.

I suggest that we bury the hatchets and join together again as one family. Could we do this for old time sake? For the cause we all were willing to give our life for?

Andy Imutan 1965-1973 Delano, Coachella, Baltimore, New York, Delano, Stockton, Delano

Susan Drake, 9/27/04

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

Grace Cisneros wrote:

for me it will be a picnic in the park, a celebration of life, family, friends.. connecting faces with our listserve group, - a closing ceremony for the listserve.

grace

Amen and ditto, Grace

Susan

Alberto Escalante, 9/27/04

RE: Mabuhay, Andy!!

Wow!

Hey... Andy! Mabuhay! How've you been? You can imagine my surprise at seeing your name at the end of your email regarding the proposed 40th Anniversary Reunion. And, YES! I believe that you, plus any & all of the other original remaining strikers of the 1965 Delano Strike, no only should but MUST be invited as honored VIP's to the 40th Anniversary of the Big Delano Grape Strike of 1965!! Because, of your (and the other original strikers) attendance and the dialogue that their presence & stories are sure to precipitate is absolutely crucial to validate and legitimize any "reunion" per say. Doug Adair mentioned in an earlier posting that he was looking into somehow getting Rudy Reyes to also attend! I suggest that we make sure that any widows or descendants of the original 1965 strikers are personally invited. I'm sure that to many for them this reunion would help them to see how intrinsic their loved ones were in those early days when just association with the AWOC or NFWA could mean getting fired, blacklisted, beat up and... even worse!

In closing I'd just like to reiterate how great it was hearing from Andy Imutan, who I'm happy to hear is still alive and well.....

Pa lam, Andy and all of my other brave farmworker friends and their families?

Alberto Escalante

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/27/04 (1)

RE: "All we have is time"

Dear Lorraine,

I was touched by what you wrote in your last e-mail and think this is the Lorraine I know:

Unknowing of the theory behind methods Cesar may have used in organizing volunteers, the community, and nation to support cause of the compesino it made sense to me as a farmworker that we could not loose the battle. As Cesar would say "All we have is time". I felt personal dignity, respected as an individual, and empowered to control my own life.

Your description reminds me of how our families, yours and mine, were caught up in something that changed our way of life forever. I had many classes in school with your brother, Memo, and always knew him to be intelligent and dignified. I am certain he and I never thought working in the fields would be on the top of the list of "career choices" after high school. I know it would have been extremely difficult for me, and am equally certain the same applies to him, to endure what our parents did when they worked in the fields. The union helped open my eyes and loosen my tongue. There weren't many options, as you well know, available to us back then, but after the union experience, I perceived the world differently. Today so many kids still graduate from high school and move right into field work or working in the packing sheds; one step above working

out in the fields in the hot sun. Farm work is never an easy life but Cesar helped workers to take charge and to decide their own destiny. I would have loved for all the good things that come with that to have happened overnight, but we know how incredibly impossible that still is. The same players are still in place but with pricier lawyers. Therefore, time is irrelevant. Cesar gave us hope and a better vantage point from which to look into the distance at a better life and future for our families. For that I will always be truly grateful. Abrazos, and my regards to the kids and to Memo. sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/27/04 (2)

RE: Organizer or Saint?

Doug and All:

I found all that you wrote extremely fascinating. You wrote in a ways I had never thought in regards to the whole question of "voluntary poverty". However, in my opinion, if Cesar could have been earning a lot of money for his family with CSO (or anyone else) and living more comfortably than what he was in Delano, i.e. Kensington house, car, etc. then he *was* in reality subjecting himself and his family to "voluntary poverty". What Cesar had or didn't have in comparison to other strikers is immaterial because he could have walked out and gone to a better income earning job. Many of the farm workers, as I see it, would have been unable to do the same. That is the difference. Cesar, having been a farm worker in the past was therefore "one of us" because he understood our life and our needs. He moved a step backwards, extended his hand, and gave the rest of us all a lift up to fight for our rights. He didn't have to but he did. Organizing a union burned in his heart. Cesar could have been earning a comfortable salary and could have been enjoying a higher standard of living. The same applies to others such as Dolores Huerta, Gilbert Padilla, and Richard Chavez. Now let's imagine for a minute their children and how they must have felt as they became aware, maybe from the beginning of the organizing efforts or some years into the struggle, as they worried about not having decent clothes to wear to school, money for school lunches, a decent washer, had a longing for a bike, a doll, a record, or even pocket money to go to a movie, that if their father really wanted to he could be earning a lot of money right now for these necessities and luxuries but he wasn't because he wanted to help others. Then Doug, I truly believe by looking through the eyes of the children that we would have to say that Cesar and others did choose a self-imposed poverty.

I remember my family thinking Cesar was "one of us" but when we learned about his life it humbled us to think he chose this life to help us. Our hearts were grateful. sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/27/04 (3)

RE: Organizer or Saint?

Doug – my thoughts

Cesar had a sense that if there was a need, there would be those who would want to respond to that need... It was a principle of organizing. If you were poor and you asked those in a certain comfort zone, they'd respond out of basic human goodness, kindness and generosity. If we arrived in a boycott city with a budget, then it would be viewed as what is your pitch? If the pitch was we need a place to rest, food to feed our family, and moreover we bring a message as farmworkers to help us, those we asked couldn't help but respond. Was it voluntary poverty for those who put themselves in this position? I think we recognized how this worked to move folks to not only help, but join the movement. We were all hooked on this principle of faith in the goodness and charity of others, and when they responded, it reinforced this belief.

What I saw in Cesar was a skill to move others to what he believed was the best in themselves. If you believed in voluntary poverty, there it was. Yes it was a principle, but moreover it worked. I don't think the principle necessarily mattered to him. It was effective in achieving his goal of organizing and building a union. Cesar was very busy and beyond wondering if it was a principle.

Non-violence was a tactic. Cesar allowed himself to be objectified by that value, not as a saint, but as a tactician. It may have gone deeper, but the evidence for me at least was that it was a

practical choice. The movement would get run over by the grower's power base and smashed before it began if we armed and used violence. Not that there wasn't small digressions into property violence, but this was really not what we wanted others to know about. Throwing roofing nails on the entrance roads for the scabs to flatten their tires was definitely on the QT. Shooting out the refrigerator units in boxcars with grapes was not discussed. There were the Border Patrols that Alberto speaks of, which were a shameful note. But Cesar did use himself to bring the principle of non-violence home to all of us, and he was convincing. I believe that one doesn't become non-violent by example. Do we really want to accept that it's ok to get your skull fractured by a goon? But there is the moment when you realize that it really works. Our experiences with the movement brought us all to that moment. We all, including Cesar slipped, but we damn well knew it worked both with the workers' families and our base of support. The Unions had some problem with the non-violent thing, but they respected it, realizing what was at stake for the farmworkers. Some even had that moment where it made sense on a higher level.

In my thoughts, whether Cesar was an organizer or a saint didn't matter. In my opinion he was more of an organizer and less of a saint. His work ethic along with most of the leadership was exhausting. But choices were made. Was the quagmire of possibilities just too much and when did we lose our focus of concentration of building a union? This had nothing to do with voluntary poverty or non-violence. This helped the Union take off but didn't sustain it. Kathy Murguia

Alberto Escalante, 9/28/04

RE: Organizer or Saint?

Sister Murguia & Readers of this Documentation Project:

The whole matter of whether CEC was a Man or a Saint was really made quite clear to me one early chilly winter morning about 1:30 am or so. We'd heard that "the old man" was coming down to Calexico to speak with Marshall about something or another. Sometimes I think he (Cesar) just got bored with the monotony of La Paz and he'd tell his compadre Mike "Let's go see so-and so!" And Mike (Ybarra) would make all the arrangements and then he'd pick up Cesar and off they'd go in that old light blue Plymouth station wagon, with both dogs, Boycott and Huelga in the back area. Sometimes they were accompanied by the older gray Dodge sedan (La Paz 2). Well... on this trip, Cesar, who hadn't been feeling very well for a couple of days (as if he was fighting off some kind of virus or the flu) had started coming down with a very bad case of the Flu. We got a call from Mike from somewhere on the road telling us that Cesar was really feeling terrible, with nausea, chills, fever and some terrible stomach cramps. We all went on "Red Alert" and a Doctor was called and told to be ready, we'd call him if he was needed. Also Mike asked us to run over to Mexicali and get some medication that Cesar had requested by name...it was Agua de Citron Magnesio, or Magnesium Citrate. So, by the time Cesar did arrive, he was in really bad shape. He looked even smaller than he usually did, and his face had a sort of mottled grayish pallor to it. He was racked with a bad cough, and he had taken his shoes off so that all he had on his feet was a pair of white cotton socks. He did have on that brown jacket he used to wear all the time. I think it was filled with down or something, and it did look warm so that was good. Cesar was complaining about his joints aching, and generally feeling rotten all over. Everything was kinda weird...I felt like I was watching a movie on TV or something. The Doctor was called I think it was Dr. Tom (Lambert) but I'm not positive and Mike rushed Cesar over to where Dr. Tom was staying. Later Mike returned w/o Cesar who had been put to bed at some safe house in Calexico. Lucky me...I got to clean out the Station Wagon... Not only had Cesar thrown up in the car...But also poor Boycott & Huelga had joined their master, CEC in a chorus of "ad Nauseum ad Infinitum" the poor babies! And Mike, well, we all know Mike Ybarra.... Mr. Stoic as ever, never once said as much "Eeechh! What a mess!" or anything He just sort of smiled and did that number where he rocks back and forth on his heels... and just smiled. I on the other hand had to change out of my illustrious "Political Cartoonist" milieu, into my Escalante the Sanitation Worker garb!! Because besides the various regurgitations of the Man/Saint & his best friends the dogs (Boycott& Huelga) I'm sure there was lots of germs and microbes floating around on the floorboard, side panels and seats of the car. And being it was pretty late/early about 3:00 am there was nobody but me & my

buddy Marcelino (Doug, remember Marcelino the cook from David Freedman camp # 1 who was nightwatchman at the Calxico F.O.) Anyway we cleaned up the inside of that station wagon until it was spotless and germless! Cesar was much better the next day, and he said "thanks" to me and Marcelino the next time he saw us... And we just said something like... "Gracias, pero de veraz no era nada. Nomas se necesitaba una limpiecita." Again Mike Ybarra just smiled, shaking our hands as he & Cesar left for parts unknown, well La Paz, actually, since Cesar was really concerned about Huelga, one of his German shepherd dogs. The other dog Boycott was feeling fine the next day, but Huelga didn't recover as quick. But for me, I guess seeing Cesar as sick as he was that night was kind of a revelation. Cesar was a just man, and not some Superman, although he could be a "super guy" if he wanted. And if he didn't have too many things on his mind. A good place to meet the "real" Cesar Chavez was on a handball court or playing with his grandkids. Or, if you're as lucky as I was, you could meet him after cleaning out his car right after he'd gotten ill. And his dogs had joined him Up-chucking in Stereo. Luckily though, Mike Ybarra didn't get sick that night, too! Helping Build a Strong Union can get strange sometimes, but it's all in a days (or nights) work for a Union organizer!

Alberto Escalante, 5764

Doug Adair, 9/28/04

RE: Nonviolence, tactic or ideology?

In a message dated 9/27/04 . . . [Kathy Murguia] writes:

Non-violence was a tactic. Cesar allowed himself to be objectified by that value, not as a saint, but as a tactician. It may have gone deeper, but the evidence for me at least was that it was a practical choice. The movement would get run over by the grower's power base and smashed before it began if we armed and used violence.

Dear Kathy and Abby,

You both make very perceptive comments. I sometimes put out an extreme position, full of chismes from People's Café, suppositions, conspiracy theories that were floating around at the time, and others on the list serve have to step in and correct me or bring me back in line.

To tell the truth, I never worked closely with Cesar, the way I did with Eliseo Medina and Gil Padilla (and Jerry Cohen). The last time I really taked to him, one on one, was during the fast, in his little cubicle. I was very moved, on the edge of tears. At one point he noted that I hadn't been going to the nightly masses (was LeRoy taking roll?) and I assured him that one time was enough, that it wasn't my kind of religion, to me it was like a "circus" out there. He assured me he had nothing to do with the show that they were putting on. But it was good for publicity. Cesar had told the staff before he went out there that this was a personal and private journey and action, and for the rest of us to continue the work we were doing, and of course the Malcriado did everything we could to publicize it.

As far as non-violence went, I got the impression that it was more than a tactic, and I was a convert, on a moral ground as well as tactical. Gilbert described the village of his grandparents in Mexico, and as the armies passed through, it didn't really matter whether it was Villa or the Federales -- the horses were stolen, the cows and goats and chickens all eaten, the young women raped or abducted, the young men conscripted or shot -- maybe the haciendado or priest killed or run out of town, maybe the big house burned down, but in the long run, everyone suffered. (After his parents (mom?) fled, and settled in Glendora or wherever, his generation would run into the grandchildren of the haciendado, who also fled to California -- everyone was refugees).

I think the message that Padilla took was cautionary-- that of course the Mexican Revolution (or the Russian or Chinese) was a good cause, Zapata (and less so, but Villa too) a great hero, but the devastation and resulting one-party rule made the victory problematic. In 1965, there were still people around who had participated, and almost everyone had family members affected by the Mexican Revolution, an issue endlessly debated by old timers, the way Southerners of my father's generation refought the Civil War. The skeptical attitude towards THE PARTY (the PRI, or the CP) was there among all the leadership of the NFWA, and when we began endorsing Democrats

like Pat Brown, we held our noses while doing so. I would suggest that the leadership was not "anti-Communist" but rather "anti-party," and that the political activity like CSO did was unlikely to do much for farm workers. Too many were not citizens, those that were were not registered, those that were registered often didn't vote, and at any rate, peasants were no longer a majority in this country, or even a significant minority. We were going to get chewed up and spit out by the dominant parties, who might use us but who all wanted cheap food for their constituents.

There was a lot of glib talk about "World Revolution" in 1968, and we in Delano felt part of that movement, an exhilarating moment in history. But I think the Catholic Worker philosophy, anti-materialist, service to others, solidarity with the poor, with its anarchist tendencies, (and yes, sacrificios) was the more pronounced tendency -- no less revolutionary, but with the assumption that even the worst scab was a brother who deserved empathy as well as organizing... that all help was welcomed, but not to get sucked in by any Party or Church that would use us and then forget us...

Viva la Causa,
Doug Adair
El Malcriado, 1965-1970

Roberto Bustos, 9/28/04

RE: 40-40

Hola, everyone, lets go ahead and set a date for the 40-40 reunion! I proposed the date of Friday & Saturday September 16th and 17th (if needed) 2005. the 16th is very important, that marks exactly 40 years of the great "Huelga" that happen in Delano California in 1965! also I proposed the 40 acres as the site, (you know why!) I check at the 40 acres and they have the union hall that can accommodate over 300 persons with tables&chairs. don't know how many can make it? but as for space, and everyone knows where Delano and where is the 40 acres is, It will be an ideal place for the 40-40 (blast from the past) reunion! what do you say? lets talk more! Roberto Bustos (capitan) 1965-1972. gracias

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/28/04

RE: Nonviolence, tactic or ideology?

Doug,

A comment off the subject at hand. We should consider enshrining People's. That was a place from which a lot of great ideas flowed along with the brew. How amazing it carried the name People's before "of the people, for the people" ever began congregating there after putting in a fourteen plus hours with the union. How perfect was that. Mocha's place, People's; who would have thought the important role it would play in our union's history. It sure seems that way from all that took place there. I don't know how my writing this will help future generations, but it seems having a "hard day's night" at a People's -type establishment is almost a necessity. sin mas/abby/ r/d/lp

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 9/28/04 (1)

RE: Nonviolence, tactic or ideology?

Does People's even exist anymore? How about a scene out of "Sleepless in Seattle" – we vow to meet at a certain place at a certain time every five or ten years. Whosoever feels moved to or can up show. How about towards the end of October, beginning of November this year for a "quickie" gathering perhaps of Valley people, like the northern group is doing, at some designated place in or around Delano. Any suggestions as to date, time and place?

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 9/28/04 (2)

RE: N.W. – UFW Reunion

I don't know, Roberto – I wasn't even the one who suggested a reunion, but as my ama used to say "no habras la boca porque te pisas la lengua" – I opened my mouth, and now it seems like I'm

organizing it. I'm not, but I will keep a list of who wants to get together, and I sent out an earlier email saying maybe "Sleepless in Seattle" scenario would be good. As for this small reunion, let's all agree to meet someplace at some time. Throw out some dates, somebody, a place to meet. There's another group somewhere up north already planning their own reunion. I sure would love to see some of the people from my past. The 40-40 reunion is an entirely different thing. I read somewhere that this even should be carried out by the UFW, they certainly have enough money to do something like that, throw a big banquet, a big pachanga, maybe memorialize some of the martyrs with a mural or something somewhere at 40 acres, elevate those who truly made the union – the people willing to sacrifice their lives for the movement. Graciela Martinez, 1965 to 1971/72, Delano, San Francisco Boycott

Juanita Brown, 9/28/04

RE: Cesar's true gift--

Hi Marshall..... and all....

From traveling 24 hours a day with Cesar during the mid-60's as we went around the country raising support and funds, and from translating for the labor leaders who came to Delano, I can say that it was not only one of Cesar's "accomplishments" to link organized labor to the farm workers themselves and to the support of churches, liberals and others....It was one of his true GIFTS. Cesar could somehow sense the pattern of what was emerging, even before it actually happened....and set the seeds into the soil, even when the harvest might not come for several seasons.

I recall a time--I think we were in Chicago-- when Cesar agreed to meet with someone (I can't even remember who)--whom I thought was completely unimportant to see with the limited time he had---and he said to me "oh, but you don't understand....that person is connected to.....and to.....and to... (and he wove a web of relationships that when I "saw" it--- I said "of course, absolutely" --and it would come to pass that just that meeting would set into motion a whole cascade of things on behalf of the union that no one could have predicted. I believe Cesar had the capacity to sense emerging futures and to act on them, particularly in the early years, in ways which were truly remarkable. I learned a lot from him in that regard.

Whatever limitations Cesar may have had, THIS was one of his gifts.....and I think one of the ways he/we were able (among all the other reasons folks have mentioned) to accomplish what seemed impossible at the time.

Con un abrazo,

Juanita Brown
1966-1970

Hope Lopez Fierro, 9/29/04

RE: Martyrs and reunions

Graciela mentioned martyrs in relation to the proposed 40/40.

For the past few years, a group in Fresno has been coordinating the building of a Chapel in La Paz as a memorial for the following volunteers who worked with Cesar in the struggle for justice -

NANCY FREEMAN - 1953-1972 - killed in Florida while helping out on the picket line.

JUAN DE LA CRUZ - 1913-1973 - killed while out on strike

NAGI DAIFULLAH - 1949 -1973 - killed while out on strike

RUFINO CONTRERAS - 1951 - 1979 - killed while out on strike

RENE LOPEZ 1962 - 1983 -killed while out on strike

CESAR CHAVEZ 1927 - 1993 - died in his sleep, with his Justice Boots on

Quote - The idea is to build the Chapel, not with a few large contributions from those who have it to give, but with lots of small donations. As with the Union, Cesar would want to know that ordinary people built the Chapel.... we ask your help in making sure that "two small coins are added..." from your piggy bank. I would like to add that a Chapel is not necessarily a Catholic shrine, but a place to sit, meditate, think, wonder, and get away from whatever ails one. The chapel is to be named MISSION CAMPESINO.

* * * *

Frank [Hernandez] and his wife Annie have been very active in organizing – behind the scenes – during the many Union events that required instant gente.

Wouldn't it be great to inaugurate this Chapel in honor of the Martyrs, and in memory of our fast dying past as has-been organizers.

VIVEN COMO UNA GRATA MEMORIA.

Hope Lopez – 66-74

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/29/04

RE: Nonviolence and religion

I agree with Kathy: my impression in 1966-1968 was that nonviolence was a tactic, for the exact reasons that Kathy gives.

I think that Cesar would have (and did) used anything that he thought would further his goal of organizing farm workers. I hope that this doesn't sound too heretical, but I got the impression that he even used religion as a tactic in the early days.

One of my distinct memories is of the first day of the Peregrinacion to Sacramento. We were starting off from Albany Street, with a number of reporters and photographers (as well as supporters) seeing us off.

Suddenly the local police arrived. I think that their purpose was to stop us marching through Delano, but my memory here is faulty. I do remember, however, that Cesar, brilliantly, asked all the marchers to fall to their knees and pray.

We were not arrested, and our release was eventually negotiated.

My further impression, from outside the movement between 1968 and 1970, and back in from 1970, was that nonviolence and religion moved from tactics to center stage for Cesar, as he indulged in more fasts (which can do funny things to one's mind), and that the new emphasis on devout religion was a distraction from building the union.

Donna Haber Kornberg

Delano, 1966-1968, London 1970-1974

Alberto Escalante, 9/29/04

RE: 300+ Union workers lose jobs as Mushroom Plant closes.

Readers of the List:

Ventura, CA. Sept. 29th, 2004) After the recent "successful" ending to a bitter 17 yr. old running labor dispute with the UFW regarding the representation of the 300 + workers at what is alleged to be the largest mushroom farm on the West Coast, Pictsweet Mushroom Farms today said it will be closing down its long time operation by the end of 2004. Company officials cited "adverse, or poor market conditions" as the main reasons for the plant closure. The Company which had been the target of a concerted 3 1/2 yr. boycott that led to the eventual UFW contract. Company officials were quick point out that labor dispute with the UFW had nothing to do with the eventual decision to close down the Ventura farm operations. The workers, who had gone out on strike in 1985 when their original UFW contract had lapsed, had vowed to remain on strike until a new contract had been negotiated and ratified. The new contract, despite the sale of the mushroom farm

to new owners, was successfully negotiated earlier this year. The proposed closure will put almost all of the plants 300 workers out of a job. A small staff of maintenance workers will remain until the present management of the Pictsweet Co. decides what its options are. The workers were given a 60 day severance notice along with their paycheck on Friday Sept. 24, 2004. The workers, many of whom had been employed at the mushroom plant since before the 1987 strike began (eventually being settled with the present UFW contract), were seemingly quite reserved by the news of the proposed closure of the plant. Most cited that many other such actions that had taken place over the years and they, too, were eventually settled. "I'm just going to keep working and see what happens next." one worker commented when asked what he planned to do about the news of the proposed closure of the large mushroom harvesting facilities located on Olivas Park Drive, Ventura, CA..

by Alberto Escalante 9/29/2004

And the beat goes on...

Que Dios los Bendige...

Alberto Escalante September 2004

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 9/29/04

RE: 300+ Union workers lose jobs as Mushroom Plant closes.

Hi everyone,

Re: The Closure of Pictsweet Mushroom Farms

The jury is still out on whether the plant will actually close, or whether it is just the tiger changing his stripes again.

In any event, the success of the UFW in getting a contract after a 17 year struggle, is another demonstration of the power of the boycott. With just a couple of staff and an army of enthusiastic workers, the UFW implemented a very successful boycott campaign directed against Pictsweet's labels that withstood the test of time. In all my time with the Union I cannot recall a chain store staying loyal to the boycott for such a long period of time. Vons and Ralphs were cleaned out in September, 2000, and they were still honoring the boycott at the time we went into mediation in November, 2003. The workers also knocked off chain stores in Oregon and Arizona and a host of restaurants, including Olive Garden, and several divisions of Pizza Hut. Many of us would not recognize the boycott design, as it was a far cry from hundreds of picket lines across the country. But the boycott organizer, Brendan Greene, effectively coordinated a strategic campaign using students, church people, labor and individuals through an e-mail network. [E-mail is an incredible tool. It beats the heck out of making those 200 calls to keep your supporters updated and active, and it is a lot easier for supporters to push the e-mail send button to get their message out to the targets]. Brendan's work was backed up by the UFW's web site and mass mailings, which received a great response. At one point during the negotiations, I was sent about 8,000 individual petitions to Pizza Hut/ Pictsweet that supporters had sent to La Paz in response to one of those mailings. Brendan and the workers got results at their visits with Pictsweet distributors and customers partly because of the strong e-mail showings and partly because of Pictsweet's "bad acts that that were highly publicized in the papers [thanks to good backup from the UFW press people - Marc Grossman and Jocelyn Sherman]. We gave our press people a lot to work with as we litigated and won a score of victories concerning Pictsweet violations of OSHA, ALRA, and CRWQCB Orders (waste water). We also got help from the County and the City of Ventura as a result of a huge compost fire that burned at the plant for over a week.

It should be noted that this struggle also contributed to the amendment of the ALRA in 2002, which incorporated mandatory mediation, in much the same way that the grape boycott of 1973 - 1975 contributed to the adoption of the original ALRA. The struggle produced some very strong, articulate worker leaders, who ended up testifying in favor of the legislation and lobbying

legislators around the state. They made the issue very concrete and meaningful to the legislators and the public.

Albert is right in saying "the beat goes on." Things change, but they also stay the same. The bottom line is that it hasn't gotten any easier to take down an employer set against the Union. It still takes a heck of a lot of time, energy, resources and most important patience (all of which are in short supply in today's world).

Best wishes & Viva la causa,

Barbara Macri-Ortiz (UFW boycott, strike and field organizer, contract administration, negotiations and legal department, 1969-1990 + the Pictsweet campaign, 2001-2003)

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 9/29/04 (1)

RE: Martyrs and reunions

Why a chapel at La Paz, which is not open to the public and is so far away from many of the farmworkers who made up the Union? Why not where it began, in Delano, at a public park, so many people and children can come see and reflect and wonder about what mission sent these martyrs to their death; a place where families can gather and share and play.

Susan Drake, 9/29/04

RE: Mission Campesino

Remember Rodrigo Terronez, probably our first martyr...a car accident in Delano, but I don't recall the details. Maybe he was trying to push to get the car started? He was very young. Gloria was, too, and their son Roger a little guy. Probably 1965-66.

Susan Drake (1962-73)

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 9/29/04 (2)

RE: Mission Campesino

Yes, I remember Rodrigo. Somebody's car had gotten stuck out in the country, and Rodrigo and his friends came along and tried to give them a push. The cars interlocked. Rodrigo jumped on the bumpers between cars, jumping up and down to try to unlock them and when the cars unlocked something happened and Rodrigo fell to the pavement and hit his head. That's the story we heard back then about Rodrigo and how he came to lose his life in pursuing a better life for his family. I don't ever remember anybody saying that Rodrigo was a martyr, but he should be included as one.

Carol Schoenbrunn Lambiase, 9/29/04

RE: Mission Campesino

And Paolo Agbayani who died of a heart attack on a Perelli Minetti picket line in 1967.

Carol Schoenbrunn Lambiase
1973-1979

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/29/04

RE: Mission Campesino

I worked with Rodrigo (Roger) in Nov./Dec. of 1965. He was assigned to the Bay Area boycott along with Gilbert Padilla. I set up meetings for him to talk with mostly East Bay folks and we started keeping 3/5 cards on supporters and noting their donations, making leaflets, etc. picketing the docks... He was one of the NFWA Veeps and was a good presenter at meetings. When Cesar came up in November (1965) for a Bay Area tour which included a Noon Rally in Sproul Hall Plaza where we raised over \$6000 for the NFWA, (Cesar notes it was \$6700 in one dollar bills in Levy's book), Roger was with him on the night before at a speech Cesar gave in Berkeley. LeRoy was there and may recall more. I was still going to Berkeley and working for Citizens for Farm

Labor. Roger followed up on my interest in helping out and I was kind of his administrative aide for several months until he was killed as Graciela describes. Sal ? from Fresno was with him. He had been down for a weekend with Gloria and his kids, Roberto, Rodrigo and his two younger daughters. He had met with Cesar and was on his way back to the Bay Area when his car wouldn't start. He got a push and when the bumpers got stuck, he was on the back of one when they broke free and was thrown backwards.

The following day I was in Oakland picking up donated paper when I got a call from Delano. I was stunned and saddened. I went to the funeral and have often thought about the loss to his family and to the emerging group of farmworker leaders. Gloria had a great voice and Roger from what she reminisced about had quite a punch (not from personal experience of course). He was a middleweight boxer and well known in the Central Valley. I carry many great memories of these early days of my work with LaCausa. I'd favor a mission project that would memorialize all those souls whose lives were lost in service to La Causa. It would be a tribute to the many, many, many souls who are now gone and and will pass and they would be nameless. How about Helen and her life of service?

Kathy Murguia (1965-1983)

Doug Adair, 9/29/04

RE: Mission Campesino

In a message dated 9/29/04 . . . [Kathy Murguia] writes:

He had been down for a weekend with Gloria and his kids, Roberto, Rodrigo and his two younger daughters.

The oldest son was Danny. I don't remember the daughters. Gloria had/has a beautiful voice. I think at one meeting she and Roger sang together (at the Negrito Hall on Garces?)...

Doug Adair

Kate Colwell, 9/30/04

About Rodrigo Terronez:

I never knew him and certainly Esther could remember the details. When I worked in the clinic the story I heard was that when he arrived injured at the Kern Medical Center ER, they did not or could not intubate him (stick a tube down his throat into his bronchi/lungs so that he could breathe) and said it was because his neck was too fat. The sense I got was that the clinic was there to take care of farmworkers without prejudice; the implication being that his death was because the ER staff at Kern were prejudiced against a Mexican farmworker and didn't try hard enough to save his life.

Kate Colwell

Donna Haber Kornberg, 9/30/04

RE: Mission Campesino

I remember the incident. I was there when it happened, and my memory agrees with Graciela's.

However, my memory also tells me that Roger was taken to the local hospital (clinic?), which was private, where they refused to treat him because he did not have health insurance. He was then put into an ambulance to take him to the closest public hospital, which was in Bakersfield, and he died in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

That was the story at the time, and it stuck in my otherwise faulty memory because it was so shocking.

Donna Haber Kornberg
Delano, 1966-1968, London 1970-1974

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/30/04 (1)

RE: Mission Campesino

DEonn and all. Yes they took him to the Delano hospital. He was hemorrhaging and choking on his blood. The hospital refused him because as I heard money problems, insurance etc. En route to Kern General at the time, he aspirated his blood, literally choking on his own blood. A simple trach would have held him. He wasn't fat. His neck was thick, but as I recall he was DOA at the ER. Anyone else have details? Cesar doesn't mention it anywhere that I know of. Yeh Doug, his two sons were Danny and Roberto. Was there a Rodrigo? What were the girls' names? Also reiterate my two cents regarding the mediation chapel for the martyrs. It would be a nameless tribute to all the souls lost in the struggle/ La Causa. Graciela, I agree it would be good to have it in an area of access. Arvin/ something more central in Fresno?? I'm working on a small memorial for all the nameless, remains buried by SF County in Colma, my two twin sons included. It's interesting what gets remembered., is what we choose to pay attention to. Kathy Murguia

Susan Drake, 9/30/04

RE: Mission Campesino

Rodrigo Jr. was with Gloria at the April dedication of Cesar's gravesite at La Paz. Didn't get more than a couple of minutes to talk with them; all I remember is the warm reception, even though I hadn't known them very well.

Susan Drake (1962-73)

Abby Flores Rivera, 9/30/04

RE: Mission Campesino

Kathy, Graciela, Jackie, and All:

I was told Rodrigo was sitting on top of the back end of the car when is jerked and caused him to fall and hurt his head. I feared riding on top of hoods or backend of cars even for short distances after that.

You mentioned Sal but I don't think that was Sal Santos. However, Sal Santos is another person we should remember. He worked for the Credit Union in Delano (after leaving CRLA) but was transferred to La Paz. He was killed returning to La Paz one winter (1972?). His VW skidded off the icy, snowy road. Jackie Brown mentioned him in one of her e-mails. What I remember about him is that he and his new bride were inseparable and had asked Cesar if they could work together. He denied the request thinking it was never wise having couples work together. When he was killed, according to Helen, Cesar was deeply affected and regretted that he did not place them together in the Credit Union. He accommodated couples when possible from that point forward when it was requested from what I understand. Sal was a dear friend of mine and gave me many a ride to L.A. to visit family when he went there to visit his fiance. Besides his wife, Sal left five children from a previous marriage and, let me tell you, it broke my heart when I would remember them after his accident. To lose a parent, as did the Santos and the Terronez children, has to be a terrible experience for any young child. Yes, let's suggest to the Chapel builders that all the names of the volunteers who died while working for the union be included in a plaque. That would be comforting, I believe, to family members. Volunteers who are gone but never will be forgotten. sin mas, /abby/ r/d/lp

Richard Ybarra, 9/30/04

RE: Roger's death

There is a Roger Lee....and Cesar did mention Roger a lot...named the clinic after him.....where many a Huelga kid, including J.R., was born.... Best to Lupe,

Richard

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 9/30/04 (2)

RE: Roger's death

Hi Richard. Yes Cesar did talk about Roger and of course the clinic was named after him. But in the sense of the details of his death, I never heard the actual story and only got it second hand from people at the funeral, and Cesar often talked about the loss and how it impacted him. Like many things it became one of the motivators in building the clinic. He was upset at how ill served campesinos were when they had medical problems and the Delano District Hospital's turning away farmworkers in need of emergency care. Roger's death was senseless and again a message of the arrogance of the Delano power structure.

Roger was replaced by Jack Ortega, who was far removed from what Roger brought to organizing. Jack was a student from Stanford who told me he had worked for the FBI sitting in on classes where the profs were suspected subversives. He didn't last long with the movement. Yes Abby, Sal Santos is another loss and Sister Florence.

I reiterate a thought I have about having a meditation room that is a tribute to all without naming people specifically. We will all find a home there for prayerful thought and meditation. Just my thought.

P.S. Sal was also born at the clinic close to the time JR came into the world.

Kathy Murguia