

## Cesar 1968

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### Chapter II - 1968

September 9, (1968)

Today we left Cesar ill in the hospital. Last night he ate half a box of peanut butter brittle and his system was unable to digest it, leaving him constipated and with a splitting headache. To complete the comedy of errors he had a terrible case of the hiccups. As I left the room, Doctor (Jerry) Lackner had just given him pills for the hiccups and an orderly was preparing to give him an enema. Two very old nuns were stationed at the door keeping guard; their combined ages most certainly exceeded 150 years but they still seemed up to frightening off friendly visitors. Cesar was completely dazed and so filled with sleep and pills that he could only grunt "yes" or "no".

We arrived home safely in Delano about 3:45 PM. There was a call from Associated Press waiting so I phoned and gave them a news release about Cesar's general condition, revealed the name of the hospital and the name of the two specialists involved. The gist of the release was that he was responding to traction and the medication and that physical therapy would begin on Tuesday. The reporter, of course, was searching for an angle but I really didn't have one for him; giving the name of the hospital and the name of the specialists should have been of some help.

Paul Fusco of Look magazine called. I think he got the word from Zimmerman that we are a little upset about Look not running the article and yet they keep coming to Delano to gather more pictures. Paul sounded a little sheepish about asking to come back and get some pictures of the Schenley workers or perhaps he is just more sensitive than most photographers and journalists. I suspect that Schenley Industries were responsible for killing the last story; perhaps the editors hope to placate them this time by giving them a boost.

We have orders from Cesar to corner Larry (Itliong) so that he can feel the real pressure of responsibility. Guess Jim (Drake) and Jerry (Cohen) did a good job the first day because Larry was at the office when Bonnie (Chatfield) and I came and then he returned again in the evening.

September 10

Doctor (Jerry) Lackner must be in his element. Taking care of Cesar also means determining more or less who gets in to see him. Bill Kircher, who is going to pay the bill,

was told "no". Fred Ross (Sr.) was given permission if he would go in the same time I did. I can imagine Jerry really digging all this arranging and re-arranging. Actually, it is better for Cesar to have only a few - a very few - visitors. People mean well but they can surely wear you out. Congressman Don Edwards called today from Washington to say hello, to ask about Cesar and to give him his regards. A nice gesture but I had the impression his secretary had just given him his daily list of important persons who were sick for him to call.

Paul Fusco of Look was here today doing some shooting. He picked a gondola of grapes at Schenley just to see what it was like. He seemed genuinely impressed about how hard the work was and how fast the people had to work. He didn't seem to be aware of what the latest developments were with respect to the story or that Cesar had been asked to write an article for Look . I brought him up to date and asked him to tip us off when the article was going to appear, if it does, so we would have the opportunity to "key off" the story. He said he would.

Seemed pretty quiet today on the boycott front, at least not much was reported that I heard about. During the month of August our clipping service sent us about 1,350 newspaper clippings regarding the boycott. Clippings from all over the U.S. but especially from Minnesota, New York, Michigan and California. The boycott has really become a national issue and it seems to be generating even more tension.

September 12

Bill Kircher came to Delano from Washington to ride up to San Francisco with me. Bill has accepted, I think, the role of a campaign director in California in the Humphrey Presidential Campaign. He talked at great length about some of his misgivings with the labor hierarchy and others and about what kind of a job it should be, etc. Then too, I think Bill is wondering if he really could cope or even understand the issues in California. The young radicals or anarchists or whatever seem not only to annoy him by what they do and say but because he feels helpless to deal effectively with them. And after 20 years or more of what he terms liberal activity, he sounds rather bitter that instead of being rewarded by being listened to, he is really an outcast and considered part of the establishment and power structure that he has confronted. It is really a harsh time for older activists and liberals of another era. Especially if they need recognition and praise for their past accomplishments.

We stopped by the hospital to see Cesar. What a difference enforced rest makes. He looks ever so much better. Fred Ross was there too. Then Fathers McDonald, Garcia and Corty came in unexpected and unannounced. Rules in Catholic hospitals don't apply to priests. Father McDonald is an old "radical" or "turk" who was exiled many years ago over the issue of organizing farm workers. Since then he has spent time in Japan and South America. A very bright person, I am told, but now only a shadow of what he was or what people thought him to be. He strikes me as paternalistic, presumptuous, self-centered and

out of touch. He made over Cesar last night like a wise old man talking with a child. He recited the Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be and Apostles Creed in such a way that all seven of us had to participate. He is one of those priests ever conscious of his priestly caste, a person set aside from other men and whether he means it or not or knows it or not, he looks "down" on others. He cannot lead because he insists others must follow. That posture is so foreign in today's world. I fear he will die a broken and forgotten man.

September 13

The Fresno Bee had a good editorial on the boycott calling on both the union and the growers to negotiate and to be willing to accept a third party mediator. I can't imagine the Bee being so forthright if they didn't expect the inevitable, i.e., some talks to begin. As long as we won union recognition, I think we would be satisfied with any decent mediation.

Talked with Cesar at length yesterday on my way back from San Francisco to Delano via San Jose. He was very relaxed, in good humor and without that tired look he has carried for so long. We discussed the possible "cessation" of the boycott -- a planned and prearranged show of responsibility and morality. We don't want to ruin the industry, etc. We also discussed how to get O'Connor Hospital to remove the grapes from their menu. Cesar gave me the gist of a letter to the Sister Superior which I wrote and had hand delivered through one of the nurses. Today I found out from Doctor Lackner that Father (Eugene) Boyle called the Archdiocesan priest in charge of hospitals and put it to him. He in turn called the Administrator of O'Connor and suggested they not purchase grapes. One of the nuns came by Cesar's room tonight to say that all the grapes were gone and that all the hospitals in the Archdiocese were getting rid of theirs too.

Doctor Lackner called at 3:30 AM this morning to tell me of a phone call that the hospital had received from a woman who said she was a nurse for a doctor who was to make an examination on Cesar the next day and could she please have Cesar's room number. The girl at the switchboard gave the number but then had the sense to let Doctor Lackner know what had happened. He immediately had Cesar transferred to another floor and notified the Chief of Police of San Jose. The Chief conferred with the Administrator today and they agreed to assign a policeman outside of Cesar's door from 12 midnight to 6 AM for the remainder of his stay in the hospital.

I guess I'm not one for meetings. Tonight was the Friday night meeting and I decided to go. For one thing Cesar was away and I didn't want Tony (Orendain) and Larry (Itliong) to jump to the conclusion that I don't respect their leadership, or more properly put, their positions. So I went. But at 7:55 PM the meeting still hadn't started and then I saw some visitors who came from out of town and who would trap me after the meeting to talk to me about working here in Delano, so I split.

September 14

Doctor (Jerry) Lackner called a few hours ago to say that a reporter discovered the fact that Cesar had police protection. And though it is only from 12 PM to 6AM, it is newsworthy. But when the reporter called for confirmation, Jerry begged him not to report it. Well, you can imagine what happened.

My father phoned a few minutes ago to tell me he heard on the news that an attempt had been made on Cesar's life by a person disguised as a doctor and that 2 policemen were assigned to guard Cesar around the clock.

My inclination is to let the matter drop with a "no comment". The whole affair is now so confused and garbled that any attempt at clarifying it is impossible because no reporter is going to accept the truth, that there isn't something that is being left unsaid. And so the most effective and truthful publicity is to decline comment. The reporters will naturally think we are trying to hide something but if they report anything it will be the product of their own imagination and sense of prophesy.

God, will O'Connor Hospital be glad when Cesar leaves. Jerry also said that Ethel (Kennedy) and Ted Kennedy called Cesar. I hope that is true. We can hardly wait until we get to work for Ted Kennedy. Father (Roger) Mahony called to say that the Bishop is definitely coming back to Fresno on Sunday. And that he will be meeting with (John) Kovacevich and (John) Guimarra on Monday afternoon. He promised to call me immediately after the meeting.

I was reminded when mowing the lawn of some of the ideas that Cesar touched upon in his speech before he began his Fast for Non-Violence last February.

-- Building a union is not worth a single life of a grower or his child or a farm worker or his child.

--How could we be so concerned about the taking of life in Vietnam and yet have so little reverence for life here in the U.S.

--I do this because I love you.

--When we resort to violence, we lack the will to win.

--Resorting to violence is really an admission of our lack of creativity and imagination.

I was so struck with Cesar's reaction when he heard that Bonnie (Chatfield) was pregnant. His eyes lighted up and he spoke excitedly with genuine happiness. When I sort of shrugged and cautioned him that it was unofficial, he refused to be daunted and said "I really like these sort of things".

September 15

Cesar is creating a crisis for the leadership of the Union. Better said, the officership. He is using the threat on his life, which has been blown up by the press, to force the officers to make a decision about whether they are going to see that Cesar is protected or not. He claims that they have to decide so that he can psychologically prepare himself. But it has the makings of a trap too, because if they do nothing - and they probably won't - then when the membership asks how come, the blame can be laid where it belongs. This whole affair leaves me emotionally frustrated because I have been trying to get Cesar to accept some kind of security measures and he has resisted and now that he is pushing for a decision about such matters I cannot help but feel remiss. Obviously the protection should come from the membership and I'm sure that we could recruit enough young men to cover the day.

I didn't go to the office today, Sunday, but I just don't relax either. My mind is constantly dwelling on what should be done. And I feel guilty about not doing more. But this is going to have to change because if I don't relax at least one day a week it is going to affect my whole week. Especially during these times when there is so much tension and when we have such lazy people to work through.

I have decided to take up again the study of Spanish. It is so easy not to learn it but so foolish for failing to do so.

September 16

Bishop (Timothy) Manning and Monsignor (Roger) Mahony met today with (John) Kovacevich, (John) Giumarra, Jr, Bergand and Frank and Paul Deaner. The growers hope for legislation and are attempting to get the Bishop in position to support them.

A bomb threat today on Cesar's house. Larry (Itliong) is finally getting the picture and Jose Luna, Philip Vera Cruz and Tony Armington have been dispatched to San Jose to serve as security for Cesar. Little by little, I guess. (George) Zenovich from Fresno is trying to arrange a meeting with Caric and Setrakian about the Union. He is concerned about the threats against Cesar's life and the possible reaction. What we need are a few threats against some of the growers in order to bring them to their senses.

Spent most of the day identifying the towns that most of the membership who will be covered by the Health & Welfare Plan live in. Ron Taylor of the Fresno Bee came by. He is thinking about doing an article on the illegal trade of wetbacks. But I soon got the impression he was after something else. Perhaps this was his excuse to get down here and was hopeful that he might come up with something unexpected. Not a word about Cesar's threat was mentioned.

September 17

Marion (Moses) and Manuel (Chavez) came back from New York. Picked them up at the airport about 5:15. Marion came over for dinner and was full of tales about the boycott in New York. By getting the community involved and really taking on those stores I guess they have really raised hell. Whole sections of the poverty areas are completely free of grapes; the managers are sick of the hassle it is causing them.

We had a sick meeting at noon of the pickets, office people and the officers. Larry (Itliong) reported about the two threats to Cesar's life, one in San Jose and the other here and told the group what steps had been taken: 1) he called Joe Luna but couldn't talk to him very well because Joe doesn't understand English. 2) He had Sally DeWitt talk to him. 3) He asked Philip Vera Cruz (who was sitting in the audience) to go to San Jose with Bob Armington. 4) He volunteered Manuel Uranday and Joe Reeves to go to San Jose too. Then he asked if anyone had any objections to his course of action or if there were any suggestions. Candy said that whoever was assigned there should stand right by the door and not let anyone in who was not a member of the Union and should even taste Cesar's food. Another man volunteered to go. Guarjado said that whoever went should be familiar with people who have business with Cesar so that an assassin would not get in. The observations of these three were obviously sincere and they were genuinely concerned. Larry ran the meeting in a half-joking, half-apologetic manner and it was quite clear that he did not give all that much weight to the problem. Larry also mentioned that he called Dolores (Huerta) and Julio (Hernandez). I made the suggestion that perhaps it was the proper time to discuss what security policy the Union should have when Cesar returns to Delano as it is a week from today that he will be released. Larry responded by saying that we have another week to give it some thought and besides there were only three Board Members left in Delano and we had decided upon this course of action for this week. As far as I am concerned Larry has had it. Both he and Tony (Orendain) instinctively react against the fact that Cesar is the famous man he is and they simply refuse to "let go", accept their limitations and work from there. Larry just doesn't work, except when it benefits himself. How Cesar can tolerate a wooden Indian like that is beyond me.

September 19

Yesterday, Marion (Moses) and I traveled to Palo Alto where I spoke to the Ministerial Association about the boycott. We spent part of the afternoon with Cesar. Bill Kircher was there. He is in California trying to build support for Humphrey. Of course it is nearly an impossible job and he is frustrated at not being able to get Cesar to give it any priority. And Bill reduces everything to a personal level, e.g., I've done this and this for you, why aren't you going to help me? But he just grunts and groans and whines his displeasure. Or he pouts and won't speak.

I complained bitterly to Cesar about Larry (Itliong), Tony (Orendain) and Bill Widman. Larry and Tony are very insecure people and are so afraid that Cesar is playing God. Then Larry is concerned almost solely with himself and fancies himself a lover, a playboy. At least Tony works and works hard! Bill Widman is a two-faced politician who tries to say

what he thinks you want to hear. He hates Delano and is here because Kircher ordered him here. He'll be leaving in December for the promised land, which is anywhere but Delano.

Cesar responded to my bitterness by saying that sooner or later he was going to leave the Union and he decided that it was going to be sooner. That he would like to organize a team to go from place to place organizing workers and once they were organized, to move on. Not to get involved with the politics that develop or to have to deal with officers day after day who don't want to move. Some of it is wishful thinking as the press of leadership will force him to remain in charge and in control. On the other hand, I wouldn't be surprised to see him resign very abruptly some day when the Union least expects it.

September 21

Last night at the Friday night meeting we discussed the issue of security for Cesar. Tony (Orendain) must have felt the pressure because he opened the meeting by calling on me to discuss the problem that Cesar is having. I played dumb and merely gave a report on Cesar's health. Then he called on Manuel (Chavez) to give his view and Manuel gave quite a talk about the need for Cesar to have protection. Mac Lyons stood up and recommended that we do something about this problem and it was the responsibility of the Executive Board to make a decision. Tony said that the Executive Board had already decided that something had to be done and that LeRoy was supposed to make some recommendations. So I reported on my conversations with (Bill) Kircher and (Jack) Conway, the gist of which was that someone should be assigned to be with him at all times and a short summary of the steps that the UAW had taken to protect (Walter) Reuther. I further elaborated about the kinds of threats Cesar had received, and Helen (Chavez) too, and that providing such protection was going to cost money and that money alone was not going to buy certain kinds of protection and therefore we needed volunteers from the membership who really understood what the Union was all about, etc.,etc. Joe Serda stood and made a very strong statement to the effect that if nothing was done, then the boycott staff in L.A. would have to return home. Tony kept interjecting that the Board had authorized action and would have someone make a motion. Manuel Chavez made a motion to appoint Mac and myself to implement some concrete action regarding security. Jerry (Cohen) then spoke about some of the kinds of threats and the need for a unanimous approval in order to make Cesar understand what we wanted. I asked that Joe be included on the Committee. The motion was passed unanimously.

Tony managed to shift the responsibility for taking the action to Manuel, Jerry and myself. But how short sighted! Had he begun with a long exposition of the problem, how he was convinced that action was needed, etc., then he would have taken on the guise of a leader. But no.

September 22

Today Bonnie (Chatfield) and I went to Morro Bay. The first time in three years and after we had talked about it so many times. Very warm on the beach, almost too much so for Clare (Chatfield), so we rode around the bay and looked at houses and the scenery. Then a short nap and back we came. Two things were uppermost in my mind: 1) Tony's (Orendain) foolishness. He says he is going to check up on me every 24 hours to see what I do about Cesar's security and that way if anything happens, he will be in the clear. How stupid! I'm not the enemy. What a waste of time and energy. And by the time he recites my "record", he will have been stoned by the membership. 2) Elections. We are going to be forced into elections therefore we should call the bluff of the growers who say that we do not represent the workers by calling ourselves for state elections in the table grape industry. If the growers refuse then they are caught again publicly in their propaganda and the moral weight of the Church and the conscience of men of good will bears down on them. If they accept, then we organize every town in the Valley. It is a good investment. My idea would be to hold the elections in memory of Bobby Kennedy. Not only would that make them more appealing but it would serve to organize for Ted Kennedy in 1972. Tomorrow I will propose this to Cesar.

September 23

Security for Cesar. That is my concern today. Everyone wants security but the thought, or should I say the realization that it costs money is difficult to accept. I instructed Doctor (Jerry) Lackner to hire professional policemen in San Jose to begin 24 hour-a-day security at Cesar's room at the hospital. When he computed the cost he was shocked and yet he has been one of the most adamant about security. Presently we have assigned four men from the Union to the hospital. Two of them are older and while all mean well, they have no training, are not secure in what is expected of them and by the this time I'm sure they are bored to tears. But if we allow that to pass for security then Cesar will be able to overturn the vote of the membership who voted to pay for his security. We simply have to face up to it: good security will cost money. Now, is it worth it or not?

I had a good idea about getting some black body guards from Los Angeles and so I called Althea Alexander for some help in recruiting some men. My thinking is that Cesar will kind of "dig it" and will be reluctant to criticize their activities though he would not have the slightest hesitation about criticizing "chicanos", however good and professional they might be. We'll see what happens. When it is all said and done, Cesar will slip out of it somehow and someday we will live to regret it.

September 25

Cesar is still resisting security measures. Doctor (Jerry) Lackner was supposed to assign an off duty security guard to Cesar around the clock in San Jose but Cesar wouldn't hear of it. He phoned Jim (Drake) and ranted and raved and said "over my dead body". When I called him he was meek and very much like a lamb. So characteristic! He said that he was afraid it would hurt the feelings of those who had come over from Delano to help with hospital



security. But really he is afraid to cross the line that allows real security. What will the press say? What will others say? He said that he has had a hard time with the nurses there because they refer to his bodyguards and he complains that they are not really bodyguards but friends who have come to help him out. He completely nixed the idea of using Blacks because it would be "fantastical" and cause a stir. And once again he said, "how will I explain it?" My point was that the membership would do the explaining. He said he was not opposed to our own people being trained but when I continued to press the urgency, his comeback was that they had waited for two years before they became concerned and that he guessed a few more days wouldn't hurt. My concern is that he will delay and delay until our sense of urgency is spent and no security will be the result. Perhaps he isn't convinced that the Board, the membership and even myself are really serious about this. I couldn't even move Cesar to agree to a night security patrol. I was doing pretty well until I mentioned the possibility of deputizing the patrol, then Cesar chocked it off.

September 25

Today we met with Don O'Brien, State Representative for Humphrey's Campaign. We had representation from the Ranch Committees at Arvin, Delano, Fresno, Livingston and Hollister in addition to three Union officers, Jim (Drake), Jerry (Cohen) and myself. O'Brien ran Kennedy's Campaign in Nebraska and was a pretty cool guy. He listened bravely as we hammered away at him but then again he didn't waste much time defending Humphrey. He took notes and asked questions and gave the impression that certain decisions had already been made upstairs. We'll see.

Some of my observations were that Humphrey should assign a man to Delano full time to work for us. This would immediately make us beholden to him especially if the guy produced and because he was on the inside he would be able "to key off" our propaganda and strategy. I also reminded him of Bobby Kennedy's strategy of always leaving his office open to us and some effort was always made on our behalf. There was always follow-through. We had quite an exchange about how things really got done in Washington and that so often it is a question of who you know and who calls, i.e., the use of power to bluff or to authorize. The reason for this exchange was because he attributed this kind of authority to himself when he worked for Kennedy as a U.S. Attorney but minimized this kind of authority with respect to Humphrey. He finally admitted that Humphrey could do similar things if he had the will.

Poor Cesar. I got the impression from Doctor (Jerry) Lackner that (Bill) Kircher was practically living at the hospital with Cesar.

September 26

When your days are guided by events and not the reverse it can be very frustrating. Your thrust, your work has no direction, no goal. You are always on the defensive. These have

been my kind of days for quite some time. Instead of building something, it seems that I am only responding. Very little satisfaction because there is little challenge. Theoretically I could be busy about many things: Clinic, Co-Op, 40 Acres, etc. but practically speaking all these take meetings of officers including their time and attention. But with all our attention focussed on the boycott, all of our expectations are centered there. The other union details and matters that come up are handled in such a way as to slide by them.

September 27

A full day. Mack and I went to Los Angeles to meet with Chuck Mosley, a man seemingly dedicated for many years to helping others remain safe from harm. A hulk of a man and yet gentle too. His knowledge of judo and karate seems natural and he demonstrated on Mack and myself but very gently. I was impressed, even moved, by his remarks and his sincerity. We made arrangements for him to come Sunday at 10:00 AM to meet with us here in Delano.

Cesar is at home but all is not well. He refuses to obey Helen and can't rest because of the kids, TV, etc. To be very honest he is demanding on those close to him and tends to be impatient. With others it is just the reverse: he is tolerant, patient and submits to all kinds of demands. So he is going to move out to the 40 Acres and set up his convalescence there. He has also asked Peggy (McGivern) to come back to Delano to take care of him. That is real trouble, if you ask me, and I will end up paying for it.

Tonight at the meeting I gave a report on our activities with respect to training security men. I recommended that for the time being Phillip (Vera Cruz) remain in charge of Cesar's security and we use volunteers as best we could. But it is getting into gear by fits and starts. There are six men there now tonight but they are so self-motivated they don't want to take orders or admit anyone is in charge. Well, little by little. And Bonnie is mad at me for inviting Marion (Moses) along with us to L.A.

September 30

Strange day. Bonnie left at 4 AM for San Francisco to testify against a TRO aimed at prohibiting our picketing. A trip that wasn't really necessary because the judge decided that a Federal Court didn't have jurisdiction in a labor dispute. Then shortly before I got up, there was an automobile collision at our corner with at least seven people involved. One car overturned and the other was badly smashed on its side. A lady had her leg broken and another was bleeding profusely. I called the ambulance and the highway patrol. It seemed like hours before they arrived even though it was only 10 minutes or so. I was pretty shook up mostly because I felt so helpless.

Cesar called a meeting with Bill Widman and Tony Orendain and myself to inform us that Tony had to have more responsibility and was in effect to be the treasurer for the Service Center, CCAP, the Co-Op, etc. That he and Tony would sign the checks and I would be

phasing out of the Center's operation and be going to the Health & Welfare Plan exclusively. This is a two pronged program to confront Tony with responsibilities that he cannot shoulder to see what happens, to let me off the hook from my own "power", and my wheeling and dealing in the past, and to create room for Pete Garcia who will be taking my place some day soon. Not that Cesar mentioned any of these reasons aloud but that's my guess.

Jerry (Cohen) told me tonight that the Teamsters are going to close down Mayfair and maybe even Safeway because of the grapes. My guess is that the UAW and the Teamsters are making a grandstand play for us and if they in fact keep that type of help forthcoming, then we will have to respond to their overtures.

October 3, 1968

#### Health & Welfare Plan - Report of Visit to Hollister Area

##### 1. Interview with Dr. Fisk Brooks (471 4th St., Hollister)

I was surprised that so many of the Almaden workers went to Dr. Brooks or wrote down his name as the doctor they would go to. But in Hollister, all but two of the doctors have their offices out of town near the Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital. Dr. Brooks has his office next door to the Welfare Department and the rest of the County Offices including the jail. I think it is reasonable to assume that most of the workers who manage to get a welfare card for their children or during the off-seasons would go to him because he is downtown and very convenient.

Dr. Brooks seems like a nice person but really dumb. He has a difficult time focussing on what you are saying and tends to repeat himself over and over again as if he really doesn't have any more to say or a least anything different. His position is that the Health & Welfare Plan should cover hospitalization because the people can always manage with the normal illnesses though of course maternity is a big problem. He estimates that it costs \$390 to have a baby.

Dr. Brooks charges \$6 for an office visit and \$5.50 for a Workman's Compensation case. (All of the Hollister doctors use the \$6 Relative Value Schedule). He extends credit to the patients and says that they are no better or no worse for paying than anyone else.

##### 2. Interview with Dr. Roderick Yip (891 Sunset Dr., Hollister)

Dr. Yip is a very young looking man, rather volatile and nervous. I got the impression that he specialized in surgery or did a lot of hospital work because his examples of illness were of a serious nature and had to do with surgery.

Yip also felt that hospitalization was the most important benefit for a worker; he kept referring to the catastrophic illness that wipes a person out, financially speaking. He kept assuming that maternity care would be included in a hospitalization plan, automatically. He referred to or characterized office calls as dealing with patients who have colds or a sore throat and of course that is so common and inexpensive why should a Health & Welfare Plan with a limited amount of money be concerned about it.

Dr. Yip acknowledged that collections were a problem but what are you going to do about it? I used the opening to suggest that perhaps a \$4 cash visit was preferable to a \$6 unpaid visit and maybe if the patient were given a choice between cash and credit he might choose to pay on the spot if it were less. At first Yip didn't see anything wrong about that but then he began to suspect that the other doctors would interpret that as "price cutting" and therefore it would be unethical.

At some point Yip began to lecture me about Medicare. How he hoped the Democrats would be turned out of office because of their programs of "socialized medicine". He claims that the Democrats say that Medicare is really insurance and that Social Security is also, but really it was taking money from his pocket and mine to pay for those who really could not support themselves. He tried to make it clear he was not opposed to medical care for the aged who could not afford it; but the idea of paying for everyone over 65 was ridiculous.

Since I had heard that some of the doctors had taken care of the Braceros on a contract basis with the growers I asked him if he knew anything about it. This prompted a small explosion. Several years ago he took a doctor's place in Watsonville who treated Braceros. He said that it encouraged the practice of inferior medicine and that most of the men who came did not really need to see a doctor. That they used to come in buses late in the afternoon and all stood in line to see the doctor. It had been the practice of the regular doctor to give them all shots whether there was anything wrong or not; and so when Yip told a bracero that there was nothing wrong, the worker in turn asked for his shot and became rather indignant when he didn't get it. Of course Yip was convinced that the men were just goldbricking. (I guess it never occurred to him that by 3 or 4 PM the men were not working and they had to come together in buses and all at one time because they didn't have their own transportation.)

### 3. Interview with Mrs. Hegg (Nurse for Dr. John J. Haruff, 961 Sunset Dr., Hollister)

Dr. Haruff is on vacation in India. Mrs. Hegg told me that he had been one of the doctors who had contracted with the growers to take care of the Braceros. That he would never do it again because it encouraged goldbricking and it was a financial loss for the doctor. Mrs. Hegg thought it likely that Dr. Haruff carried more people on his books than any other doctor in town. She almost gave the impression that she thought he was much too generous in this regard, though I think she was also trying to indicate how generous she

thought Dr. Haruff was. She also felt that Dr. Haruff would be most willing to serve on a panel of doctors serving eligible workers.

#### 4. Interview with Dr. Telfer, County Medical Doctor

Dr. Telfer has been in Hollister only one month and thus was not too well informed about the medical scene. The County has a general clinic every Wednesday morning and to be admitted you must have a referral from the Welfare Department. On Mondays there is a pre-natal clinic and on Thursdays a Planned Parenthood clinic. Then of course there are the usual inoculation programs. The doctor is on call 5 days a week for emergency hospital care for the medically indigent; local doctors cover the other two days. If he delivers a baby there is no charge to the patient for his services though there is the usual hospital charge. Though rather reluctant to commit himself he felt that much more could and should be done for the medically indigent with respect to outpatient care. He was not clear just how a person received clearance to come to the County Clinic except that they brought a card from the Welfare Department.

#### 5. Interview with Supervisor of the Welfare Department

For those persons who do not qualify for a Medi-Cal card but who are judged medically indigent they are given a permit to use the County Doctor next door. Determining who is medically indigent is rather hard to pin down but there are the usual detailed questionnaires to be filled out and then if a person does not have more than \$500 in convertible assets he is considered medically indigent, I think. If they receive a pass to use the pre-natal clinic then they will automatically be admitted to Hazel Hawkins Hospital when delivery time comes and the County Doctor will deliver the baby. The County then reimburses the hospital and in turn bills the patient for the hospital care (no charge for the doctor) and in fact the County has now set up a special department complete with a field investigator to insure the fact that the family pays back month by month what they owe. The indigent are also billed for ambulance and x-rays taken at the hospital.

#### 6. Interview with Mrs. Yockey, Director of the County Collection Agency

Mrs. Yockey said that before her department was established it was the practice of the Welfare Department to bill the medically indigent who used the hospital but they never sent the bills because of their work load, etc. Or if bills were sent, they were ignored and thus people were used to "free" medical care. Mrs Yockey said that her department was not going to be "rough" on anyone but these people had to be educated to pay something each month towards the cost of their hospital care.

#### 7. Interview with Fred Evanchak, Owner of Physicians Clinical Laboratory

Mr. Evanchak reacted very strongly when I told him some of the doctors were advocating hospitalization as the basis of the Health & Welfare Plan. He said that every doctor was

carrying thousands of dollars on the books and that the collection problems were severe. His lab bills the patients directly except when there is insurance involved then he adds his bill to the doctor's but the insurance company never reimburses him directly but indirectly through the patient. In practice this means he still has to put pressure on the patient for his money.

His price structure is:

Blood Count \$ 6.50  
Blood Chem 5.50  
Pre-Natal Work-Up 12.50  
Urine 3.00  
Cultures 12.50  
Chest X-Ray 12.50  
Wrist X-Ray 12.50  
PBI (Thyroid Tests) 7.50

Fred was very open to the idea of working out a special schedule of prices for the Health & Welfare Plan especially if payment was guaranteed.

#### 8. Interview with Mrs. Jose Luna

Mrs. Luna says she likes Dr. Kirch and Dr. Quinn. Not many people like Dr. Brooks and she definitely doesn't like Dr. Yip. Her sister was operated on by Dr. Yip and it was OK but there is something about him; well, she just doesn't like him. (It should be noted that most of the workers indicated that Dr. Brooks was the doctor they went to.) She thought that Dr. Quinn and Dr. Kirch were the most popular.

#### 9. General Notes

1. Hollister does not have a County Hospital as such. There are three hospitals with different kinds of services, viz., short term, long term and continuing illnesses. The medically indigent are sent to one of the three depending on their illness and the County reimburses the hospital and then collects from the patient.

2. There are seven doctors in Hollister. I still have to visit Doctors Jone, Currie, Quinn and Kirch.

3. A clerk in the Welfare Department and one in the Health Department said they thought Almaden Winery had a hospitalization plan before the Union came, then the company dropped it. (One of the women referred to the Union as "the Mexican Union".) George Morrison from Almaden says he doesn't know about any plan but he will check for me.

#### 10. Some Things to Think About:

1. Women have very strong feelings about this doctor or that doctor; perhaps a panel of doctors will cause fewer headaches than the choice of only one doctor.
2. Are the doctors unrealistic about hospitalization? Their position is that even if it covers something, it is better than nothing. I'm still not convinced of that point of view. While I was standing in Dr. Quinn's office waiting for him to return from surgery, a nurse from the hospital came in to pay on her bill and was complaining that Blue Cross only paid \$21 of the \$100 for this particular test or medical procedure and she was upset about it.
3. Perhaps it is possible to insure the workers for what is called a "major-medical". A major-medical is a relatively inexpensive insurance against the long-term illness generally resulting from an operation and requires extensive hospitalization. The patient has to pay a cash deductible, e.g., \$100 and the insurance company pays 70 or 80% over and above the deductible up to \$10,000.
4. I think that when doctors talk about hospitalization they automatically include maternity care. Almost all of them made reference to the expense involved in having a baby. In other words they considered it "catastrophic".
5. Perhaps a panel of doctors in the Hollister area would accept a scheme whereby the patient pays \$1 for an office visit and the Plan pays 3.50 or 4 dollars. Such a scheme would protect the Plan from over utilization and at the same time stretch the dollars available to the Plan.

October 6

Several days have elapsed since I wrote anything. The days seemed to have been full of activity and work and thus the need for setting down something on paper wasn't there. Writing stems from frustration, at least for me. It is a kind of activity that makes up for my "lack" of activity. I mean I write only as a way to try and do at least one meaningful thing for the day.

Cesar has pretty well escaped having to consent to accept security men. While he is convalescing at home there are two men outside providing security. But he nixed our plan to select some members for special training in Los Angeles. He countered by insisting that he wanted to select some strikers first. I give up. We have tried! The only thing that will work is when some of the members just attach themselves to him and do it!

Doctor Joe Okimoto visited on Friday afternoon and on Saturday. Cesar really tried to discourage him by painting a realistic picture of what the problems will be and how the Union can give no backing at this time to the Clinic. My guess is that Joe will be bitten with

the challenge and will want to come and try his hand. I think he will do very well. He's a good man.

Today I loafed. Watched the World Series and the Raider's football game. Later in the afternoon we took a ride to Glendale. There is a possibility that I will be going to Los Angeles later in the month to work on the Humphrey Campaign.

October 12

Very tired. Just a few random notes.

1. Cesar is cool to the idea of getting a doctor because some day he wants Doctor Brooks to come back.
2. Gil Rubio has been neutralized by Cesar getting Jerry (Cohen) to defend him -and some of our people - against the police.
3. Manuel (Chavez) and I will be working in East Los Angeles for the presidential campaign by organizing people there to help us and then bringing in our own workers.
4. Cesar is feeling much better and was in a very good mood today. Very crabby and irritable day before yesterday.
5. Manuel (Chavez) and I hit the UAW up for 10 thousand for the ELA campaign.
6. (Alan) Cranston came to see Cesar for endorsement and to get his picture taken, etc. on Thursday.
7. Mac Lyons is picking up the ball to push the security for Cesar through - with or without Cesar's approval.
8. I spent Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in bed with a bad cold.
9. Just impossible to juggle all of the things we have cooking. Seems like we just transfer them and or put them off until we simply have to act. Spread very thin.

November 19

Seems like ages since I have written anything and how many times have I resolved to do so. A diary is like a piece of old furniture, it can't help but grow more valuable if not for its quality at least for its sentimental value. Bonnie, Clare and I spent four weeks in East Los Angeles working on the Humphrey Campaign. I found it very exhilarating. The long hours, the excitement of trying to build an organization. I guess it was kind of a relief to get away



from Delano. It seems that when Cesar is away from Delano or out of the center of activity, Delano closes in on me. Petty differences, struggles for authority that don't mean anything, jealousies - all of these things seem to rage when Cesar is away. Perhaps it is because his presence is powerful enough to protect those of us who work around him and who become the butt for this activity.

Bonnie, Clare and I went to Santa Barbara on Sunday to spend the afternoon visiting with Cesar and Helen. Cesar and I talked about (Ben) Berkov and the Health and Welfare Plan, some of the internal problems of the Union, the Bishop's Statement, and about the money for the political education fund. Cesar bounced two ideas against me: how to use the ideas and techniques from the Liturgy of the Mass to enliven the Union meetings, e.g., singing, a few rituals, scrolls on the wall with sayings, etc. The other thing was a retirement center for the Filipinos, a kind of Co-Op living where each one could raise chickens or a garden, where meals could be in common. You can tell Cesar is much better and his morale is good when he talks about things like this. I think he deliberately does this to stimulate us. He tries to have something for everyone. This forces us out of the doldrums and gives us hope and a spirit of achieving.

November 20

Yesterday I made the final arrangements with Ann (Israel) and Peter (Matthiessen) to finance the heating of David's (Averbuck) pool so that Cesar can continue his therapy when he returns from Santa Barbara. I stressed to David the pre-condition, that is, the water must be heated to 97 degrees. If Cesar returns and the water at Delano says 95 degrees, he'll comment that the water in Santa Barbara was 97 degrees and he felt so much better there. The whole cost is expected to come to \$900 and I have sworn Ann and Peter to secrecy. We'll see.

Today there was a news release that DiGiorgio was selling his 6,100 acres in Arvin and Lamont and that without a union successor clause the union would be without a membership there. Building this Union has certainly been a series of setbacks. I guess that is how unions are born and built.

Have it in mind to see if Aetna Insurance Company sponsors awards for agents who work with minority groups. Ken Leap, an agent for Aetna from Fresno, has done a terrific job for us. He is honest and has performed a remarkable service for us. He comes to Delano each week to service us and the membership. I'm sure he makes money at it too but no one seems to begrudge him that. He came to East Los Angeles and worked in the campaign with us for a weekend. He parked cars for the day when Bobby Kennedy came to break bread with Cesar. He has also made himself useful in a variety of ways.

Tonight I put up a flood light in our backyard area. I guess we have been a little uneasy since some one fired a pellet gun through our front window last week and since our house was burglarized. Kind of shakes you up, at least for a while.

The folks were here for the weekend and then came back Tuesday night on their way back from L.A. to Sacramento.

November 21

Spent most of today lining up appointments with doctors from Kingsburg to Sanger tomorrow. My hope is to get them to cooperate a little with their fees but really there is no hope of that, at least until we can build our own clinics or hire our own doctors. Some of these guys really flinched when I mentioned farm workers or union. They just don't know!

Jerry (Cohen) announced a primary boycott of Bank of America today at a press conference in San Francisco because of their refusal to talk with the Union about negotiating a contract. Jerry said that Larry (Itliong) came to the point of endorsing the student riots and lectured the press for 15 minutes. That's all we need at this point, a call to violence!

Have begun to look for a Political Action Center in East Los Angeles. An abandoned church or synagogue or something along those lines. We need a place where we can build a base of operation, not only for the boycott but for political activity as well. I would hope some day to get involved in that kind of organizing. Time will tell.

Talked with Rudy Ahumada in Montreal. He seemed forlorn and I hated to bring up the subject of money or how Cesar jumped me about paying Rudy and the boycott also meeting his expenses but I felt I had to, at least to warn him.

Hope to get Aetna Insurance Company to give an award to Ken Leap for his work on our behalf.

Bonnie ran out of money for the month today. We discussed it at length. The question of buying. What and how much. But looks like we'll have to take money out of the Credit Union to make it through Christmas. And then we have the coming baby. We owe \$100 more to the doctor and we will owe the hospital \$150 at least. We still owe \$340 to my folks for the furniture we bought but if the insurance money comes through for our stolen stuff we will use it to pay them off. That still leaves our big bill with Sears for our washing machine and the one we bought Helen (Chavez).

November 23

I understood last night why I am having a difficult time with the Health and Welfare Plan. My work there has been halting, tentative and generally working around the fringes. The reason, quite simply, is I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know what to do. The terminology is different and I don't feel comfortable talking about things I have to learn at the same time. Then too, I have been visiting doctors but with no specific purpose. I

already have the answers to the questions I ask them. But little by little I am evolving a course of action.

1. Plan to talk with a few doctors in depth about a plan for preventative medicine. For example: Doctors Freedman, Brooks, Wolohan and Quinn.
2. Try to make a bold move in the field of lab testing. If we contract with a medical lab we can control the prices, the tests and collect invaluable data about the workers.
3. Think in terms of using the Plan to conduct a series of medical tests through our Mobile Health Unit.

If I stick with it, do some reading, and keep out of tangential union activities maybe we will get to the administrative part of the Health and Welfare Plan where I feel more comfortable.

November 27

Thanksgiving is tomorrow. Gen (Burns) is here and my folks arrived tonight. So it is with marriage and beginning a family: holidays take on more meaning and family tends to come together. This afternoon I met with Doctor Freedman and his elderly father who was visiting from New York in Shafter. Because of Thanksgiving, I presume.

At last I am beginning to come up with some pretty concrete ideas regarding the Health and Welfare Plan. Automated lab diagnostic testing, mail order drug services are two ideas for cutting costs.

Yesterday I drove over 600 miles in one day. Left at 4:45 AM and returned at 10:00 PM. I'm exhausted.

November 30

Harriett, Linda and Susan were arrested last night in L.A. on a felony charge, conspiracy to commit property damage.

Manuel (Chavez) calls me for the bail, six grand. Of course I couldn't do anything late last night but Gary (Bellow) tried to get the bondsman to accept pink slips as collateral. No decision reached last night. Today the bondsman said he would be out of his mind not to demand cash collateral. Manuel sent two guys to pick up a check for \$6,500. Gary and I agreed he would not use it unless he heard from me.

I headed to Santa Barbara to visit Cesar but had to turn back at Gorman because of the fog. I called Cesar and he said "absolutely not". We could not put up six grand for bail for people we don't really know but to talk to David (Averbuck) about it. I called David and he says Cesar said that we should do "anything" and "go the limit" if necessary to get them

out. Cesar had said not to use my check from the legal fund, that the money was going to come from the treasury. David said we would use my check. My guess is a good as yours. Cesar was protecting himself (and me) by placing the burden of decision in the hands of the attorneys, the legal office, because if there was any internal kickback, "well, the attorneys thought it was best, etc. etc.". Otherwise I am confused.

The end result was that Gary got the bail reduced to \$500 each and perhaps the charges reduced to a misdemeanor. Gary used the money I sent him, only in the amount set by the judge, of course, and I guess we live happily every after. I don't know whose idea it was for the girls to help the boycott in this way at that location but it sounds pretty screwed up to me. Anglo girls working a Chicano area Safeway store, if that's really what happened.

December 5

Peter Matthiessen was here today. He's finished his article for the New Yorker and has enough for a book, which he is turning over to Random House for publication. Now he is off to Africa for six months to do a series on game preservation, again for the New Yorker. He brought \$900 for the pool, discussed how he might buy and donate Cesar's birthplace and finally he wanted to donate a large oak tree to be planted at the 40 Acres. The perfect symbol for the Union.

All in all we spent about three hours talking. He's a great guy and terribly perceptive. I got the impression that his book cuts sometimes to the bone. At one point he said Cesar told him, "it hurts but it's true!"

Manuel (Chavez) is headlong trying to buy the property near Yuma, Arizona. I'm sure he is going to get it all goofed up - that's because he's lost his cool about it. He's headlong! - the only description.

Tomorrow I go to Santa Barbara to take Cesar to the doctor in San Jose. We have made arrangements to stop to see a chiropractor in Carmel, a Doctor Lockwood who fixed a girl's back here in Delano eight years ago.

The Co-Op has taken a turn for the worse; for the second month in a row we have lost money. Fred (Dresser) and I spent several hours discussing the matter and some reforms are being implemented. I think he resents somewhat my telling him what I think should be done. One of the problems is that he is too kind hearted and doesn't like to give orders. I'm sure its a kind of over reaction to his former life as a businessman as contrasted with his present one as a minister.

We'll see what happens. Fred would like to hire Fats (Sanchez) as a supervisor and I think he has a good point.

Marion's (Moses) benefit in New York was held last night in Carnegie Hall and it was two-thirds filled. She thinks she cleared \$13,000. That's not nearly what she had hoped for but I think it is very good and only a person who has tried to put off a big benefit could possibly know what is involved and the heartaches.

December, 1968

Special Delivery Letter from Bonnie Burns Chatfield

LeRoy Chatfield  
c/o El Castell Motel  
2102 Fremont St. Room #41  
Monterey, California

Monday 11:30 PM

Babe,

Just couldn't get to sleep so I got up and took 2 of your Librium & made myself a cup of hot chocolate & put 1/2 a shot of whiskey in it. Maybe that will do the trick. I feel better already but that's because I'm writing to you. It's been a long time since we wrote - in fact I think I only wrote you once - maybe more. The one letter I remember was to tell you "what a good friend you were - but nothing more". At least that's what I thought I was writing. I know now that I never believed that.

Babe, I'm still sorry about the way I acted the other night. Sometimes I become so small and selfish and thoughtless. And you are always so patient and kind and understanding. I know, too, Babe, that so many times you do little things just to please me or make me happy - things that maybe you don't really want to do, or don't care about doing. And I never say anything at those times - to thank you or show you I appreciate it. I do, though.

It seems that now, Babe, I have everything that I ever really wanted or dreamed of having - a good and loving husband, a healthy baby & the prospect of more. I know that nothing else is important as long as there's us, Babe - together. At least for me I know, too, that "us together" has to mean that I accept the fact that you have to do what you have to do. And just to love you & trust you & always be here for you. And that's all I want to do & be - I just pray that I can be good enough & strong enough for you, Babe. I do love you, so much, and I do trust you.

It's funny how little things, trivial things, can seem so important, so vital to our happiness - I just mean "our" in general - when we know that they are only stupid & insignificant. I always said to myself that I wouldn't get that way, that I wouldn't fall into such a trap. But I know I do sometimes - and sometimes often. You never seem to though, Babe. You are

so committed to what is really good and important - and I am committed only through you. Which is fine, I think, as long as I can stay strong & "with you".

One thing for sure - I guess I'm not intellectual any more - or don't even make a pretense at it. I wandered around the Fresno State bookstore today & looked at all the enlightening material - then bought "Rachel, Rachel". Looks sexy, anyway.

I think Clare misses you, too. She always seems so expectant when she's eating dinner at night & turns to the back door if I say "where's Daddy?" I decided I shouldn't say that because then she gets disappointed.

Did Marion call you? She called here person to person & sounded urgent - she always does. I gave the operator the number - figured she'd call & hound me if I didn't.

It seems that there was more I wanted to tell you - mostly about how I love you so much & how I will try to show it instead of just say it. I miss you Babe - but now it is Tuesday & so one day is gone, and it is one day closer to when I'll see you. We haven't been apart this long since before we were married. It is the same - the way I count the days and finally the hours. Only now I am more spoiled & miss you even more.

I think that the Librium & the whiskey are working & I feel relaxed & sleepy.

I love you.

B

Tuesday 9 AM

I'm just sitting here eating breakfast with Clare. Helen (Chavez) called to see if I was still here. She said she woke at 1:30 & was going to call. I told her I would still have been awake. Sylvia (Chavez) wouldn't stay here & I wouldn't want her. She'd scream every time she heard a frog jump outside. I know. That's why I think it's best if I just force myself to get over it.

I tried to fix the basin yesterday & got the elbow off after about 1/2 hour. There was nothing but a bobby pin there. I couldn't get it back on tight, but tight enough to run the water & see that it's still stopped up. I'll ask Mike (Kratkow) if he can come when he has some free time.

Have to hang the wash now.

Love,

B

