

Dedication of Agbayani Village - 1974

Introduction by LeRoy Chatfield

A United Farm Worker dedication ceremony, hosted and moderated by Cesar Chavez, was a two-hour long bilingual sum of its parts – not including the food service provided afterwards – part religious, part pageant, part entertainment, part fundraising, part union rally, and part community-building.

Agbayani Village was a dream-come-true for Cesar Chavez and his farmworker movement – a retirement village for the UFW “Filipino Brothers” built by movement volunteers at the union headquarters in Delano, the Forty Acres. Not only would the Village provide affordable housing for elderly Filipino farmworkers no longer able to work in the fields, but it was meant to be a living monument, which would remind us that these workers were imported in the 1930’s as cheap labor to serve California Agribusiness and were forced to live in a society that prevented them from owning property or intermarriage.

In addition to Cesar Chavez, some of the voices you will hear in this 1974 dedication ceremony belong to Phillip Vera Cruz, Pete Velasco, Gilbert Padilla, Dolores Huerta, Marshall Ganz, Eliseo Medina, Father Eugene Boyle, Esteban Torres, Jimmy Herman, Jack Henning and Tom Donahue. (If you do not recognize any of these names, Cesar Chavez will introduce you to them.)