

**UFW DOCUMENTATION PROJECT
ONLINE DISCUSSION
May 2004**

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/4/04:

RE: ANNOUNCEMENT* ONLINE DISCUSSION GROUP* MAY-DEC 04

GREETINGS TO FORMER UFW VOLUNTEERS,

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The documentation project is sponsoring a private, online discussion group that will begin on Saturday, May 8 and end on Friday, December 31, 2004.

Who is eligible to participate?

All former UFW volunteers are eligible to participate in the discussion group.

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What is the purpose of the documentation project online discussion group?

The only purpose is to develop the historical record of the farmworker movement, 1962-1993. This online discussion group gives each former UFW volunteer – not simply those who wrote an essay – the opportunity to contribute factual information, give opinions, write commentary or ask questions. If there is enough discussion by participants, then the historical record created by the farmworker documentation project should be thoughtful, insightful, penetrating, well rounded, and balanced.

Will the historical record created by the online discussion group be made public?

Yes. The discussion archive created by the participants will be published in a CD format along with the 175 farmworker movement essays. Email addresses will not be published.

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Reminder!

The nfwaleroy@listserve.com is not an online chat room or gossip forum and while there will be differences of opinion, I expect the discussion to be thoughtful, sincere and civil.

Thank you for your generous words of support and your financial contributions to the documentation project.

LeRoy Chatfield 5/8/04:

RE: DISCUSSION TO START TODAY

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1. There are 301 former UFW volunteers enrolled in this private discussion group.

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SOME BEGINNING TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

1. I read each essay. I was surprised how many times that Fred Ross, Sr. – and his training role – was mentioned in the different essays. If the essays had been written covering my period of personal experience, 1963-1973, that would not be the case. Fred was certainly involved in the early farmworker years but not to the extent he shows up in later years. It surprised me.

2. I was pleasantly surprised to find how different and unique each essay turned out to be. I had been fearful that since we were all writing about the “same” movement that we would write about the same things. NOT the case, and I believe this makes the documentation project even

more valuable. I learned something new with each essay I read. Did you have any surprises when you read the essays (or some of them)?

3. After reading the essays, I have formed the opinion that Proposition 14 (1976) was a life changing event for the union, even more than the passage of the ALRA in 1975.

I don't know if this is enough to get the discussion started but we will give it a try.

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Richard Ybarra, 5/8/04

RE: DISCUSSION TO START TODAY

While I have not read the host of essays yet I know they are rich with details, depth and definitions of our shared life changing and changing life experiences. I want to read the essays before going deeper into the interesting review of times past and lessons learned. The one suggestion I would make today LeRoy is that in the aftermath of Cesar's death I had a number of interesting conversations about his death (especially where we were that morning and other occurrences around that time) and some of what mattered to him and us during our time with the union.

I had the opportunity to speak with Father Bill O'Donnell (who died recently) just after Cesar's death and he related some interesting stories about his time with the union and with Cesar. Oftentimes we stayed at his place when we would be working in the Bay Area. Let me add my thanks to you for taking the time and making the time important enough to matter again. This is a history that is well worth exploring and revisiting for the memories and the valuable contributions and lessons.

While I am not sure of its relevance or if your informal rules here allow for it, but I would like to take the liberty of proudly announcing that last Saturday in Maui Barbara Chavez Ybarra was married to Emilio Saludado Magana..... and life goes on.....

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/8/04

RE: Fred Ross, Prop. 14, etc.

Hi All:

When I was on the LA Boycott in 1974, Fred conducted a huge training program to teach all of the staff organizers his method of conducting house meetings. This included breaking down the script/ content of what should be covered in the house meetings, role-playing among ourselves, as well as Fred attending and critiquing our handling of an actual house meeting. In LA alone we had over 100 people on staff that summer and since his training was repeated in boycott cities across the country, that is one big reason why a lot of us who were on staff that year got to know Fred.

Two things strike me about Prop 14 – one, it was a tremendous accomplishment to get so many valid signatures in so short a period of time that it really showed what the union could do when it went all out. (For me personally, I know it tested my physical limits like nothing else before it had.) But, more importantly, in my mind it really was just an inevitable outgrowth of the ALRA; once the union made a conscious decision to work *within* the legislative system, we lost some power because of that. . . All of a sudden we're reacting and trying to figure out how to play by someone else's rules. . . So, LeRoy, I would say that perhaps it comes across as life changing because everyone dropped what they were doing to go work on it (and we couched it as being a life or death fight for the union), but I personally think the ALRA was the bigger turning point.

In general to all of you who wrote essays, I've enjoyed reading them and thinking again about those years (Big kudos to LeRoy for putting this all together!) I attended the dedication of the National Chavez Center a couple of weekends ago; the memorial garden and visitor center are well done and very beautiful. It was great to see some old friends, but I had very mixed feelings being back in La Paz again. Just a sense of sadness that all that energy/ passion/ potential that we all gave so much to is now being focused on a museum.

And, hey Ybarra family, congrats on Barbara's wedding. Is Emilio Ralph and Maria Magana's son? If so, it really is a small world.

Terry Scott
1973-1988

Theresa Bonpane, 5/8/04

RE: Fred Ross, Prop. 14, etc.

hi all, in terms of organizing skills learned, i learned most of mine from you, leroy, and marshall ganz and Jessica Govea, who, i believe, learned theirs from fred ross. while working on, was it, sb 40, no on 22, or ...? that blase and i were assigned to the canby house in the san fernando valley. colleen was 1½ years old and blase martin, 6 months. my remembrance was that you, leroy, called us each morning and worked with us to set up the day's agenda: when and where to leaflet, what telephoning to do, what to request, how to follow up, bring in volunteers, do house parties, etc. since that time, forgive my humility, but I have become known as a "top organizer (all credit to you!) as i have been organizing ever since, the office of the americas still follows much of what i learned from leroy, jessica and marshall – thank you! love, theresa bonpane and the office of the Americas...

LeRoy Chatfield 5/9/04 (1)

RE: PROPOSITION 14 ONE MORE TIME

I did not generate much discussion about my observation that Proposition 14 (1976) created a sea change in the farmworker movement – and in Cesar personally – even more so, in my opinion, than the passage of the ALRA (1975).

Even though not much discussion has been generated about my opinion, I do not yet want to let it go because the issue is important (I believe) and the essays show it to be so.

Consider these points:

1. In 1976, 40 volunteers left the Union and in 1977, 36 volunteers left. This number represents 10% of the volunteers who came and went from 1962-1993. True, I cannot make a direct link between each person leaving and Proposition 14 but there are many such links within the essays themselves.
2. Essay writers talk about the superhuman effort that was required to gather the signatures to put the measure on the ballot. Many talk about their personal exhaustion, working 7 days a week, 14 hours a day. Gathering the signatures was a marathon experience.
3. The essay writers talk about the shock of losing the election and felt it was a crushing defeat. For many of the volunteers this was the first time that the farmworkers movement had been publicly trounced. The boycott victories and the ALRA 1975 summer farmworker election victories seem to fade away.
4. Essay writers talk about the La Paz post-election debriefings (sometimes volatile), about the large reassignments of volunteers and evaluations (sort of like choosing up team members) made about whether this volunteer was more suitable for the union's number one priority of field office assignment/organizing or their number two priority of trying to keep some of the fire of the boycott flickering. I'm sure some of these decisions were gut wrenching for those in charge who were making them and even more so for the volunteers whose usefulness was being evaluated and who were handed their assignments.
5. A public relations loss of such magnitude was bound to create hard feelings. And there was no one else to blame besides the state's voters. Proposition 14, it seems to me, was a self-inflicted wound. Neither the growers nor the teamsters sponsored the initiative, only the UFW.

To create the historical record about the farmworker movement, I believe Proposition 14 needs to be discussed. Was it a case of movement overreach? I'm sure Cesar made the decision to sponsor the initiative but who else was pushing for it? And why was it deemed so necessary? Was there any discussion about the risk of defeat? Is it possible that then governor Jerry Brown had a role in the decision? (The reason I ask this is because I happened to be present when Jerry said he would support Prop 14 but only if he was the only TV spokesperson (in paid TV commercials). It was also at this meeting that Grey Davis agreed to be the liaison with the IFW in producing these commercials, etc. That was Grey's first involvement with the UFW.)

I don't want to leave you with the wrong impression that I ask these questions because I was opposed to the Prop. 14 decision and my opposition was overruled. NOT THE CASE. In 1976, I was neither in favor nor against the UFW sponsorship of Proposition 14 and in any case no one asked my opinion about it and there was really no reason for anyone to do so because after the passage of the ALRA I was no longer involved in any strategy planning with or about the UFW.

Perhaps I make too much of all this but the documentation project would find it helpful, if those of you who were volunteers at the time, could shed some light on the issues that I have raised.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

Angie Fa, 5/9/04

RE: Fred Ross and Proposition 14

There is additional Fred Ross material out there, but it is scattered and very hard to come by. I think his archives are at Stanford. Earlier attempts to preserve and get Fred Ross' organizing lessons out and keep the house meeting organizing model alive, were made especially by Paul Milne and the Institute for Effective Action. There was a small booklet of Fred's sayings (dichos) which Paul helped put out; it was distributed small scale by either the Institute, or Neighbor to Neighbor. I transcribed early drafts of the booklet onto computer. I also had the honor of being the one who put Conquering Goliath onto computer disks. Either I volunteered my time, or at times may have been paid by the Institute for Effective Action, or when I was on union payroll at the Hotel and Restaurant Union Local 2, the President gave permission for me to occasionally drive up to Marin and Fred would dictate his changes, and I would type and print the material out. Fred would buy me lunch at the Good Earth Restaurant and I would get to pump him over lunch about the UFW, the CSO, Japanese Americans during WW2, and the 1930s. Towards the end, I remember Fred was working on another manuscript or two, but Cesar's first choice was the Oxnard story. There were also drafts about the Bloody Christmas campaign, the 1951 police brutality case where the CSO was the first to take on and win a case of police brutality against Chicanos, and the DiGiorgio campaign, where Fred was able to take even new, inexperienced organizers and train them in the midst of the campaign so the election could be won.

Wearing an academic's hat, I think that when we think about Fred Ross' legacy it is crucial to see the big picture of Fred's entire influence, both before the UFW, during the UFW, and after the UFW. Fred should be known as one of the great people of the 20th century. His life touches on so many of the crucial events of the past century. Gary Delgado has hinted at some of Fred's organizing legacy in a small passage in his book on ACORN, but Fred's full scale organizing impact has grown even larger since then. Then there are Fred's roles within the migrant camps of the 1930s and the WW2 concentration camps for Japanese Americans in the 1940s. After he left full time work for the UFW, Fred continued to train organizers in issues of peace and justice in Central America; he also did training for FLOC organizers in Ohio, and asked the Institute to help him do the house meeting training for the Nuclear Freeze because he cared so much about the issue of disarmament.

Proposition 14 and changes in the UFW after 1976 is harder to discuss in a public forum. I still feel a big need to be protective of the union and Cesar, and to make sure that future generations understand the context which union leaders operated within. When I was doing my PhD dissertation, the dissertation which one of the professors really wanted was one I could not write, a very critical account of what happened to the UFW over the years. I could not put anything out in writing which could be used against the union and those who continue to improve the lives of farm

workers. Even rewriting the dissertation on the legacies following the movement, I still worry about these issues. Some of the Proposition 14 impact was the result of the superhuman effort, and burnout that followed. But Proposition 14 was also probably the beginning of a conscious consolidation of the union. Years later when I asked Jim Drake about it, he and "some of the old timers" were blown away by what they heard was actually going on in the name of the union in some of the boycott cities. Proposition 14 was when everyone got called into California and the leadership got a chance to see the people who represented the union nationwide and hear about some of the practices going on in some of the cities. And some of it wasn't pretty. I know that first hand when I did the Rhode Island Boycott in 1979, and heard from all sides. There had been people really using the boycott pre-Proposition 14 as almost a front for building the youth wing of a left political organization at the same time. They were recruiting young activists into both supporting the UFW and joining this other political organization. If it was hard for a young short term organizer to deal with and hear this history, it must have been incredibly difficult for people who had devoted their lives to building the union and gone through the McCarthy era, when ties like these would have meant the death of the organization. But there also were people who felt that they had been caught up by mistake, in some ways possibly similar to what Richard Ybarra wrote about so eloquently when he talked about how he had been the wrong one to be "laid off." I think interviews and decisions were made so quickly at La Paz after Proposition 14 that mistakes might have been possible. Finally, I have never had the resources and time to go through the FBI material and always wondered what external forces were doing inside the union to destabilize things during this period. Has anyone else looked at this material?

Thanks Leroy for pulling this together. Is the fundraising going okay?

Angie Fa 1976, 1979

Barry Winograd, 5/9/04

My memory perhaps is fuzzy on this, but is it correct that the union was offered a deal through the Democratic leadership (Leo McCarthy?) that the ALRB would be back up and running, coupled with a statutory proposal for key changes to assure no future strangulation, in exchange for the union dropping the ballot measure plan, but that Cesar in particular rejected the arrangement, arguing that only a constitutional amendment would suffice?

Barry Winograd

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/9/04 (2)

RE: DID SPEAKER LEO MCCARTHY OFFER A DEAL?

Barry Winograd,

I'm sorry but I do not know whether Leo McCarthy offered such a deal or not.

This is the first time I have heard this but I hasten to add that I was not at that time in a context where I would be consulted about Proposition 14.

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Marshall Ganz, 5/9/04 (1)

RE: PROPOSITION 14 ONE MORE TIME

Cesar took the loss very hard. We had indeed been offered a deal to drop the ballot measure because Democrats were afraid that it would help mobilize anti-Carter voters in opposition. Brown tried to persuade us to drop it. Leo offered us a deal. We were all riding high (except, perhaps, Richard who always had a more pragmatic approach), thought we were more or less invincible (after the ALRA, the election wins, and our work on behalf of Brown in Democratic primaries around the country), thought we could wrap this problem up once and for all and so we went for it . . . carried by a kind of hubristic momentum. We found ourselves out of our league when the grower ads began to hit, defining the meaning of the proposition, and, us, with a barely developed media strategy (Bill Zimmerman had offered to do the ads, but we were suspicious of

him and so got a Beverly Hills guy named Harold something or other to do them and they turned out awful which is when Brown said he would do the ads, but wanted to be the only spokesperson . . . he really thought his popularity was such that he could carry it off better that way.) When it was all over, it shook us all, but, in retrospect, it seems it shook Cesar more than anyone. In fact, we never had a debriefing of Prop 14, never assessed why we lost it, what our mistakes were, etc. During a meeting at the North Unit which was supposed to be doing this, Cesar climbed in through one of the windows to short circuit the debriefing.

But Cesar was already going off the deep end. The summer before, in planning the election campaigns, he had been only marginally present. During his walk up California in the late summer, he resisted scheduling it so we could use it to organize active worker participation. He resisted assigning the staff we needed to coordinate the campaigns. But by early spring he had begun to conceive of the Nick Jones conspiracy, targeting Joe Smith of the El Malcriado first – a witch hunt to which we all shamefully acceded. His obsession with the conspiracy was already going strong by the time we made the Prop 14 assignments, which is why Nick and Virginia were assigned to Fresno, rather than LA or SF, as a place “where they could do no harm.” Susan Sachen, Mark Pitt and others were targeted as suspects. And in the big meeting after Prop 14, Fred and I had the dubious task of trying to distinguish who was an “asshole” and who “wasn’t.” So while losing Prop 14 was a big blow to Cesar, no doubt he was already acting in the paranoid mode that led to the purges right after the campaign was over. Under other conditions we might have better been able to take the loss of Prop 14 in stride.

I don’t know if this is what you wanted to hear. But there it is.

Marshall Ganz, 5/9/04 (2)

RE: Fred Ross and Proposition 14

The greatest service one can give to "future generations" is to be truthful, rather than protective. People have no chance to learn to how to avoid tragedies like that of Cesar and the UFW if they do not understand what happened .and why.

Tom Dalzell, 5/9/04

RE: PROPOSITION 14

I am not convinced that the loss of Prop 14 was a turning point, but it certainly was a watershed event.

As Marshall writes, there were signs that all was not well before Prop 14. I remember the winter of 1973-1974 and pretty much all of 1974 as fairly difficult times, with Cesar retreating into the short-lived fantasy of the Poor People’s Union. I think that enactment of the ALRA was a serious challenge for Cesar, something that he didn’t particularly want but felt he had to agree to due to pressure from the Church and the AFL. The first round of elections threatened Cesar in several ways – the traditional base in Delano did not respond with any great enthusiasm when given the chance to throw the Teamsters out (and the problem was not just the Filipino workforce supporting the Teamsters), while a new block of workers, the tougher and less malleable vegetable workers, emerged as a future power within the union. Further, the younger leadership (Eliseo, Marshall, Jessica) emerged as clear winners in the new game of elections, and Cesar perceived this as a challenge to his leadership. By the time the ALRB shut down, we were not unlike Br’er Rabbit and the briar patch; it was convenient to blame the growers for the shut-down, but the pragmatic among us were glad for the breather and aware that the next round of elections (especially asparagus in Stockton and the grapes in Coachella) would favor the Teamsters, while I believe that Cesar saw a chance to reassert control over a situation that was changing quickly and not to his liking.

Prop 14 was not our first defeat (the summer of 1973 comes to mind), but it was a public and political defeat which could not be turned to good. Cesar’s faith in his ability to take his case to the voters was shaken, adding to his growing lack of confidence in a new world. I don’t remember

when the Malcriado purges were, but I know that there were not a few right after the loss of 14 – Nick and Virginia, Steve Rivers and others.

As had been the case in the past, we all rationalized what we didn't like and moved on. Eliseo took over contract administration, and a second wave of organizing drives was launched in Imperial. In early 1977 Jerry negotiated the jurisdictional pact with the Teamsters, which meant that we had the best labor law in the country, a labor board that was publicly pro-worker, and no competition – an open road to the unionization of all California farm workers that was, as I remember from the timelines on the walls of Filipino Hall in Delano in 1968, the first step in unionization of all farm workers in the US.

In March, those who were focused on organizing (Marshall, Jessica, Eliseo and Jim Drake) were prepared to debate the priorities for organizing in 1977 –vegetables or grapes. It was an important question, and one that warranted serious debate. Instead, Cesar took the Executive Board to Badger Pass to learn the Game, and by April Cesar had led the Union into the self-destructive, purge-happy hell of Synanon from which we never recovered.

So, though – looking back I think you can say with some certainty that Cesar had completely lost it by early 1977. Was this the result of losing Prop 14, or was Prop 14 one data point in a series of data points? I'm not sure that question can be answered, but it was certainly a big and important data point.

Tom Dalzell
El Malcriado, Philadelphia boycott, Legal Department
1968-1980

Richard Ybarra, 5/9/04 (1)

RE: Personal and confidential

LeRoy,

While there may even be some facts stated here...the visceral anti Cesar stuff (that made each person within these confines who they were and who they are today) are too much like others who determine history but at the time gladly shared in the decisions made.... the charges of losing it, paranoia and self destruction, those of us who were practical.... don't seem true to me, though I see some of the logic,sadly what comes out to me is that the forum might become either at best a debate society or a this is the right white part of the story.... I guess when others throw out names like Mark Pitt or Smith or the Joneses were screwed... it sets a poor tone in my mind... perhaps it was true and I was around still and was in some of the discussions with Cesar, but also knew how each person so far mentioned and/or participating here were regarded by and even how they related or disregarded Cesar.... i.e. The Malcriado purge there was not even about union politics - a very clearly defined leftist group had come in as staff and were determined to undermine anything they could and had to go, period! No link to any of the others.... They did simple stuff like when I asked Cesar if I should take his 36 rolls of European travel film to Bakersfield he said, lets give it to our folks at EI Malcriado. Result - not one picture! They purposely exposed and ruined the film..... "practical ones" like Tom Dalzell were the ones who pushed hardest with Jerry to get themselves paid more than Cesar's standard. I remember arguing with some of them at the time, letting them know that Jose Luna and Pancho Botello are as or more important than any attorney. Those were some standards that needed to be maintained, at least at that time... Also, most of the nay sayers hated or resisted Cesar trying to use computers and making them read organizational management books....

While I support your efforts on the book and the essays totally my own need to lash out at people who are backbiters and don't put the blame on me folks makes me think I will forego the website route...As you know I am a total and consummate Cesar guy. I was not trained by Marshall, Eliseo, Fred or Richie Ross..... it came from Cesar and later from you and even some of the best from observing a lot of the other talented people...

I think you know I can take and face any heat politically, personally or otherwise, but I do not know how to slap fight. The gauntlets that are being laid out would cause someone like me to

strike hard and fiercely at certain people and personalities. You/ we don't need that, but I am troubled by some of the early waves arriving on shore... has the early makings of dead fish turning up in a red tide of sorts.... I have said the same things publicly about John Giumarra Jr and once about Pete Wilson and other famous anti Cesar folks...that they said stuff now that they dared not say to him or at that time.... shame on them for saying what they did not say then...He is not here to answer nor defend and the cheap shots are not conscience clearing historical insights. I think I told you that at Cesar's funeral I told Marshall that his national tv stuff was a chicken shit cheap shot at Cesar.... he has not spoken to me since. When we met with them regarding Cuomo I told Jerry his L.A. Times piece that he was paid to write was a chicken shit insight from someone who was like 8 or more years removed from the action.... I guess my point is that unlike you and a very few others, they did not know how to "lose their friendship with Cesar" honorably and do a class act disassociation.... and let go of the petty stuff.

Earlier today, before reading these, I was talking to my brother Danny, who also knew all these folks, some more closely than I. We debated a bit but he said to me, "I don't like LeRoy's chat room. It is going to give a forum to every asshole who did not like Cesar and there were lots of them.... I am not trying to be a nay sayer nor discouraging, just being as honest as I know how in suggesting not that there be rules, but for God's sake some level of professional etiquette that does not put spotlights on people or issues who have not offered themselves or their cases for those purposes. I don't think Joe Smith or Mark Pitt, both of whom were good guys and friends of mine. In Joe's case he came to my house after he was fired, we talked and tried to work on clearing up some things together....

Richard Ybarra, 5/9/04 (2)

RE: Fred Ross and Proposition 14

My one contribution to this particular discussion will be that some people choose to live in or view themselves as having lived in tragedies, while others look at what was done by themselves and the beacon that brought them all together to make contributions, the best they could and can, to what was to become history...the same history that they could redefine, try to refine, but know down deep that we lived it the best could at the time... Imperfectly! As someone wrote accurately wrote about me when I was the wrong one laid off, I found no need to say who were the Anglo union leaders who wrongly told Cesar I was bringing marijuana onto the 40 acres. I never blamed him or them but I lived and worked long enough to turn it around serve him faithfully, proudly and loyally and even work well with just about every one of his detractors then and after that time....

Thanks to all of you who did what we done and good luck to you in your current and future endeavors....

Richard Ybarra

Nancy Grimley Carleton, 5/9/04

RE: Thank you, Marshall

[Marshall Ganz wrote:]

The greatest service one can give to "future generations" is to be truthful, rather than protective. People have no chance to learn to how to avoid tragedies like that of Cesar and the UFW if they do not understand what happened and why.

Thank you, Marshall, for your wise words, and for your willingness to tell the truth as you know it. I found your comments about Proposition 14 quite illuminating.

As I'm sure is the case for many others, when I wrote my essay for the Documentation Project, I first went through an internal struggle between the part of me that still felt the weight of loyalty toward the union and Cesar - and the part of me that felt called upon to speak my truth out of the understanding that the personal is indeed political. I ended up relying closely on my journals from the time, and I strove to give as full and balanced and truthful an account of my time with the union as I could.

I believe LeRoy is sincere in his intention to create a setting where all of us can express the fullness of our perceptions - and that in the end this will best serve history as well as those involved in future movements for social change.

Regarding Proposition 14 as a pivotal moment in the union's history: I would say that the passage of the ALRA followed by the losing campaign for Proposition 14 together resulted in a sea change in both the union's strategy and its self-identity (losing the tool of the secondary boycott alone meant a tremendous shift in what the union could accomplish through its supporters in the cities, and to have this followed by a clear message that the public could not be counted upon in an election was undoubtedly a shattering experience for Cesar and the union leadership). But my sense is that this sea change was compounded by personal demons that Cesar was not able to keep in check. Indeed, I think a full history of the union would need to look at the complex interplay between political exigencies and the personal characteristics of its leader. Like many great men throughout history, Cesar had both incredible personal strengths and noteworthy character flaws. The flaws do not take away from all he contributed, but they do deserve examination if we are to understand how it is that the UFW, for all it accomplished, in many ways fell short of its promise, particularly in the period of the late 1970s and the 1980s.

Just as Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi continue to inspire millions even though history has documented some of their flaws, I believe Cesar's legacy will live on. In the end, I think that he'll be remembered as a great civil rights leader even more than as a union leader.

Nancy Carleton
Boycott Staff, 1975-1976

Deborah Vollmer, 5/9/04

RE: Marshal just hit a nerve . . . and here is some of what I remember, about my years with the UFW

Folks,

Marshall, you just hit a nerve with some folks, I am sure, but then again, I don't know just who is on this listserv. After all of these years, it is very difficult for me to be objective about my work with the Union. I had some of the best experiences of my life working with the Union, but also some of the worst.

After I moved from Bakersfield California in 1997 to return to my childhood home in Chevy Chase Maryland, in my typical pack rat fashion, I packed away boxes of notes and a sort of journal that I kept, thinking that one day I might fish them all out and perhaps write a book of my own about my experiences in California, especially from when I worked with the Union. But I got involved with other things, and some of the memories were so painful that to this day, I have not reviewed my journal from those days.

I can't even tell you exactly how long and when it was that I worked for the Union. Actually, my work with the Union started before I came to California. I was initially involved minimally in the Boycott as a student -Clark University in Worcester Massachusetts, from which I graduated in 1970, and I can't remember for sure whether it was grapes or lettuce, but we were focusing on what was being sold in the school cafeteria - and again as a law student at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, which I attended from 1970 to 1973, again I seem to remember boycotting lettuce (or was it grapes?) in the school cafeteria.

Also during my student years, one summer, and I can't remember the year, I spent part of the summer working on the Boycott in New Jersey (with Joe Thek, Edie Camel, and some other folks whose names I don't remember, but they will probably come to mind if I think about this enough).

It was either later that summer, or a different summer, that I spent time working with Mack and Diana Lyons with the farmworkers in Florida. I moved around to the different UFW field offices-Haynes City, Avon Park, etc., getting reports from orange pickers concerning how many oranges they were putting into these huge tubs-it was to document the farmworker case that the workers

were being underpaid, because they were putting in more oranges into the tubs that they were being paid for.

And then finally, after law school, from which I graduated in 1973, I was thrilled to achieve what then seemed a goal of a lifetime- I was accepted to come to California to work with the legal staff of the Union, first as a paralegal, and then after I passed the California bar as a lawyer for the Union. I started at La Paz, and also spent a good deal of time working in the Delano office, and at some point, very briefly, worked in Salinas. Over the course of the few years that I worked on the UFW legal staff in California, my work included working with other Union lawyers on some of the big civil lawsuits, some minor criminal defense (misdemeanor, picket line stuff), and a little work on ALRB hearings.

Soon after I started working for the Union in California, the joy of my life began to evolve-my first and only serious love affair and partnership, lasting nearly twenty years (until his death), with Philip Vera Cruz. I have refrained to this point from participating in the essay project, or even in this e-mail discussion, in part because, as I said, I sort of moved on to other things, but also, because some of the memories are so painful that I didn't want to go there myself, and wasn't sure if others on this list would really want to go there, either.

Marshall's reference to Cesar's paranoia and the conspiracy stuff just brought it all back. My beloved Philip and I never acceded to the witch hunt to which Marshall refers; the sad fact is that Philip, dedicated Filipino-American farm worker organizer and Vice President of the Union, became a target of the witch hunt, and I, because of my relationship to Philip, also became a target. As I write this, I am asking myself, but how many folks on this listserv really want me to go there? So let me make just a few more brief comments, and then sign off, at least for this evening.

Cesar did great things for farmworkers, but his downfall was that he could never accept criticism of any kind; even constructive criticism from his friends. Unfortunately, I think this tends to happen with most leaders, when they achieve a certain amount of power. From what I observed, one of the few people who could get away with giving Cesar constructive criticism was Jerry Cohen. Philip and I tried on more than one occasion, but we were marginalized, and ultimately classified as enemies of the Union.

This was so sad, because Philip really had love in his heart for the farmworkers and the movement, and had his own following among Filipino farm workers, and also among university students, especially Asian-American university students. And Philip was right on a lot of issues where he differed with Cesar-that Filipino farm workers were really treated as second class citizens within the Union; that as we were fighting for democracy for farm workers, those of us on the staff had few rights and no democracy; and that Cesar was wrong-totally wrong-to have made that trip to the Philippines as a guest of the dictator, Ferdinand Marcos. Also, you may recall that Philip had differences with Cesar on the issue of how undocumented farm workers should be treated. Cesar was inconsistent on this issue; at times he just wanted the "scabs" deported. Philip chose the more difficult route; his position was that the focus should be on organizing these workers to support the Union. Not an easy task when one remembers what a hold the growers had on these undocumented workers-the fear factor-go against the grower and support the Union, and you not only lose your job but get deported. But Philip's position was the more principled and I believe he was right.

There-I've gotten some of this off my chest. I am curious to know now how many of you just want to kick me off this listserv- after all these years, are we UFW veterans still polarized into the two camps typified by two totally different world views: 1) Cesar is so wonderful and he can do no wrong and must not be criticized, and 2) Cesar's paranoia and obsession with conspiracy makes it so difficult to work in this movement that I love, that I am sure one day I will either be fired, or have to quit. When I worked with the Union, that was the way it was. I think I myself was fired and rehired a total of about three times, between the time I first joined the staff, and the time I left (or was I fired?) for good.

I got myself in a few tough pickles, which I carefully recorded in that misplaced journal (probably in a box somewhere in my basement). Early on when I was working with the legal staff at La Paz, I objected to the practice that the Union had of opening the mail addressed to volunteers. In my zeal as a young attorney, I believe I even dared to question the legality of this practice.

Then there was some incident where I championed the cause of some students visiting La Paz from Albuquerque, New Mexico, who I felt were mistreated by Anna P., and I talked to Philip about it, for which I was later accused by Cesar of the unforgivable sin of "politicking with the Board." I think I was fired after those two incidents, but subsequently rehired, thanks to the intervention of Jerry Cohen.

Some of my experiences, as well as Philip's, were written about in a book written by Craig Scharlin and Lillia (sp?) Villeneuve (sp?) based on interviews with Philip, and which I actually helped to edit, and somewhere I have a copy of that, too, and that book records a lot of this. . .

And there was another book that was written quite a bit earlier than the book about Philip, a book about Cesar- (was the author's first name Ron? could it have been Ron Taylor?) which I thought presented a rather balanced picture of the internal workings of the Union, including some mention of the problems with internal Union bureaucracy - does anyone on this list remember the big to-do about the joke memo sent by Jerry Cohen from "Number 4"? Something about directing people to use their telephone exchange number for their *personal* identification. The scary thing was that so many folks didn't see this as a joke, but actually took it seriously. . . (not only did I read about this later in a book; I was there when it happened!)

Most of the books that have been written about the Union from a pro-union perspective, I think, unfortunately, only speak of Cesar in glowing terms, almost as a saint who could do no wrong. I think all that adoration fed his ego, which in the long run became a very bad thing for the Union.

Peace,

Deborah A. Vollmer

Sharon Delugach, 5/10/04

RE: PROPOSITION 14

I am writing with a somewhat different perspective about those Prop 14 days because I was at the other end of the staff spectrum: I was a brand-new recruit. I had dropped out of high school to join the UFW fulltime after being a stalwart volunteer in 1974. I was 15 when I started working fulltime with the LA boycott in the summer of 1975. Those were such exciting times. We were really lucky to have Fred Senior leading the housemeeting training and I learned so much that I was in a constant state of exhilaration and exhaustion. My big disappointment was that I couldn't be an organizer because I was too young to get a driver's license.

I worked on the insane signature gathering for Prop 14 in Los Angeles, then Ken Fujimoto recruited me to the East Bay for the actual campaign.

I worked (several layers) under Paul Milne in Oakland. He was about 20 at the time and in charge of a staff of about 50? 75? It was the most intense and rewarding experience of my life, before or since. It was grueling, but people's morale was great. That is, until the growers' commercials started and even we at the bottom realized that we were getting our asses kicked. The agribusinesses put a "small farmer" in their commercials. We had Jerry Brown in a suit in an office. Many of us grumbled that we were being beaten at our own game.

And then we lost the election and gathered together in La Paz for the postmortem. I remember it well-partly because I turned 17 in one of those meetings! A lot of us were looking forward to that series of meetings so that we could commiserate and lick our wounds together. But it became clear that Cesar in particular did not want to hear any criticism about what had gone wrong. I vividly recall the session where we were told that we should evaluate the campaign and could be completely honest because Cesar was out of the room. People began to share their thoughts and complaints about how the campaign should have been different.

Suddenly Cesar climbed in through the window and was yelling, Bullshit! We were stunned at how angry he was, and defensive. Maybe we who were not in leadership were terribly naive, but this seemed completely in contradiction with how the union ran. We were used to singing every morning and talking about highlights and lowlights, not blaming ourselves for things, many of which were completely out of our control.

I guess the purges started then or right after, and I realized that I couldn't/ wouldn't work for the union anymore. Like so many people, I felt like the rug had been pulled out from under me, since I had been prepared to give my whole life to the UFW. Things continued to deteriorate – when did Cesar bring Ferdinand Marcos's labor guy to Delano? Before or after the Game? ugh.

Anyway, these recollections and discussions are fascinating, especially because I had no idea of all of the strategies and political forces guiding the whole campaign. Nothing of this changes the fact that Cesar was a genius at movement-building. My experience with the United Farm Workers truly changed my entire life, and *allowed* me to work with and learn from the most dedicated, brilliant and determined organizers in this country.

I look forward to continuing discussions.

Sharon Delugach
1975 - 1977

John Gardner, 5/10/04

RE: PROPOSITION 14 ONE MORE TIME

My wife Julie Kerksick and I decided to leave the UFW when the decision to go with Prop 14 was made in the fall of 1976.

Our reasoning was this:

- The Prop was predictably going to lose, and not by a small margin
- The decision to go with a major campaign when the field offices were in shambles reflected a fundamental problem within the UFW that would probably not be addressed, much less resolved, by anyone, and was certainly beyond our power to influence at all;
- The UFW at its cultish, sectarian worst would soon be visited upon us, as indeed it was, replete with Fred Ross Sr. Benedict Arnold calls and the usual nonsense
- The combination of the loss and field organizing collapse, along with the effective dismantling of the boycott operation, would more or less permanently dismember support among the fickle CLE (Coastal Liberal Entourage)
- The UFW would probably go into the usual organizational psychosis of paranoid internal blame and withdrawal as a result.

Lest we sound smarter and more prophetic than we were, we also thought the union would, notwithstanding all these issues, win another sixty to eighty field elections and sign maybe one-third to one-half the contracts from elections already won.

We were sure wrong about the latter.

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 5/10/04

RE: Fred Ross

I am amazed at my ignorance and again repeat my gratitude to everyone for this opportunity. I was an 18-year old, wide-eyed, hopelessly idealistic young woman who had few skills to understand the larger picture or how decisions were made. In my head and heart I just couldn't understand why we couldn't sit down with the growers and talk things out!! There truly was a cultish devotion to my picture of justice as it merged with the vision of the UFW.

I wrote in my contribution about this young man, Robert, who held these morning and evening accountability meetings with us in San Diego to help with our organizing efforts. I had filed this

away in my mental history as a tactic taught by Saul Alinsky. No?? I should have been crediting Fred Ross? I remember that associating Saul Alinsky's name with what we were doing seemed dubious. Is there a connection that my lazy historical memory has forgotten? As someone else said, this way of planning and accounting for my day's tasks became a way of life for me, long after Robert's meetings.

I left the UFW in mid-1974 and later remember the embarrassment I had when Cesar went to the Philippines, wondering what had made him get involved with that regime. There were a few other public incidents that startled me, but I was no longer part of the process and thought, simply, that there was a process that I was no longer a party to and could not understand the higher purpose.

It does not take away from the powerful experience that I had, or the social good that Cesar generated, to know, and process together, these important twists and turns that have been written here. Apparently this has been a missing link. It is also part of the history, an opportunity to get some perspective and potential healing - and one that verifies the necessity of humility in the face of power.

Jackie Davis
1971-1974

Anna Adreini-Brophy, 5/10/04

RE: Documentation project

Over the last few days I have been pre-occupied with my husband's serious health issues so have not been able to focus on many of the e-mails... the few I have glanced at have left me wondering why all this is necessary.. It's obvious there are some bitter and or unhappy people in ANY movement, organization, government as well as in own families!! Perspective and potential healing is fine but at what expense...Cesar who is not here to participate... his family, or all the people, especially the young Hispanics, who desperately need role models?

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/10/04 (1)

RE: Documentation project

Anna,

You ask difficult questions and I have no easy answers.

People say and think what they say and think, that does not make it automatically true or not true, or right or wrong. The readers or the listeners will sort it out for themselves.

I don't worry about Cesar's legacy surviving because of this open discussion 11 years after his death. If anything, it will be enhanced. Mark my words.

You don't need a password to make your views known to the rest of the former volunteers, just send an email to: nfwaleroy@listserve.com

Nice to hear from you, Anna.

LeRoy

Richard Ybarra, 5/10/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

apologies where needed.... this was sent to LeRoy's personal address but bounced to our other old world... Blessings to you all...

LeRoy,

Here is what I meant to send last night. The overnight has calmed me some, but I now think my reference to my brother Danny's comments in this longer note are right, so I will opt out of the listserve, however that is done. Anyone, nuts or otherwise is having their day to tee off on CEC and as my note from last night explains, I can't play or honor that stuff.... just like I don't need to

elaborate about all that I know, names that I know... it does not matter.... I don't need to tell the world that Dolores always thought Marshall was the informant or that a very credible woman overheard him and Mo Jourdane in Oxnard one night in the late 70's talking clearly about "he is in the way and has to go".... Hell if any of us had half the pressures and a portion of the informants and other provocateurs in our lives, we sure would not have been aspirants or advocates of non violence....

I am still supportive of all you do otherwise, just don't and can't be enrolled in a hate Cesar or take pot shots at someone who can't defend themselves forum for frustrated and bitter former volunteer liberal white folks and jews....

I think we can use the lessons and the teachings a bit more productively as occurred in your first meeting with Ken, Fahari, Richard, Cisco and me.

.Susan Drake, 5/10/04 (1)

RE: Susan Drake 1962-1973 on timing of UFW's decline

Fascinating stuff. I, like Angie, feel protective about Cesar and the UFW OUTSIDE the ranks of these 800 or so folks LeRoy gathered. But inside, I agree with Marshall: we need to take a hard look at what went wrong, especially to help those currently organizing outside the farmworkers movement.

Cesar fired me in 1973 because I told him that I wrote him a letter saying I thought he was losing sight of the workers when he held out for Giumarra or no one when it was time to renew grape contracts. What did that say to the growers and workers who had given their all for 3 years trying to make contracts work? We would lose membership dues, too, I suspected. We'd expected growers to work with untrained field office staff; some had been patient with that and now Cesar was turning his back on them, from where I sat in his office. Cesar would have brushed me off except that I made the mistake of naming David Burciaga (whom he fired shortly after me), Marshall, Jerry Cohen, Jim Drake, Bill Kircher and Irwin DeShetler (last 2 of AFL-CIO) as saying there was a lot of truth to my criticism, but "Cesar won't listen to us." How naïve I was!

Later Cesar and I "made up" because, he said, that Marshall had put me up to writing the critical letter. I was furious that he didn't think I was smart enough to figure out the problem myself – besides Marshall and I probably hadn't said much more than "Hi" to each other at that point.

Susan Drake 1962-1973

Steve Hopcraft, 5/10/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

Wow!

I wasn't going to weigh in on the discussion, but the racist nature of Richard's email really shocked me and brought back some bad memories!

The ugly tone of your email harkens back to the worst days of the Game that ended so many of our wonderful associations with the Union.

I'm not sure how you wipe that away with "blessings to all."

It is just that attitude that brought so much good work to a screeching halt.

It didn't take away from the great things Cesar and others did, but it sure balanced them with unworthy firings, false accusations and naked power plays.

I count my time with the Union as one of the best of my life.

I also recognize that imperfect people did some bad things that hurt others.

That includes all of us, even Cesar.

I know that my own firing was based on a lie that Dolores Huerta made up.

I saw other colleagues fired based on absurd lies delivered by people they trusted, folks very close to Cesar himself.

You got to take the good with the bad.

You can't bury the one and hold the other up for praise.

If you can't take responsibility for your past actions, and can't bear to listen to criticisms of imperfect people – dead or alive – that is no fault of others.

Best,

Steve Hopcraft
Organizer, paralegal 1975-77

Gary Brown, 5/10/04

RE: doc project

Dear Everyone:

Holy Crap! I've only just started reading this stuff and already I'm nearly loaded up.

Here is a different perspective about Prop 14. I had already left the Union before Prop 14. I helped during the campaign but my view by the time of the vote was more of an outsiders. I did not believe that many, except maybe those of you in the inside, held the loss as a rejection of the Union. Insiders might have felt it was a public relations loss but the UFW was not and has not been the only organization to lose a proposition.

By late 1974 I had left the union because my family was not receiving the support it needed to stay. It was no longer acceptable for a small family to be grouped with the singles. I had a child and a wife. Both of us had been full times since 1971. We could live on \$5.00 a week and room and board but I expected the board. My wife and I were driven away by this lack of support. Prior to that I had what you might say was the feeling I was being taken care off. By 1974 that was going away. Look, my wife and I were experienced, full-time workers, working for nearly nothing and when we threatened to leave unless we had a least some small considerations as a family it was "See ya."

LeRoy you gave figures of the loss of volunteers in '76'. '77'. It would appear to me that the loss of the "Boycott" division of volunteers was significant. I have always though that this was unexplainable. I was away from the Union but always wondered why the Union lost those volunteers. Was it finances? Was it a change of tactics? It could not have been Prop 14. We had not been fully successful in other actions. Having spent since 1969 with the Union in both full and part time capacities I was already aware that the Union could lose. The San Ysidro tomato strike in 1971 was a loser but it generated an incredible number of full time volunteers for the Union. I don't think the Gallo boycott was a full success, nor the Safeway boycott. By 1974 the staff on the Boycott in San Diego could have handled loses such as Prop 14.

My point is this. How could the Union let go of one of the most potent and aggressive political action enterprises created? If the Union was hemorrhaging volunteers, Prop 14 could not have been the reason. Did the Union ever discuss its losses in volunteers? Was it concerned? What I heard was that the boycott was shutting down city by city. I would like some discussion about where the boycott went?

And about the Cesar bashing. First of all, Richard or Danny or anyone else ought not to bow out just yet. How many of us are there? Everyone is going to have their perspective, assembled from bits of information or misinformation that they have stewed with for ten, twenty, thirty years. So they get a chance to spout off. Who is left to alter the view, if you leave? If there are some that "blame" Cesar for this or that, then tell me why that's not so. You leave, so does you information. You leave what you hate the most to go on unfettered. I don't get that.

Love and thanks

Gary Brown 1969-1974

Ellen Eggers, 5/10/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

Richard... I already sent you a response that just went out to you...now I kind of wish I had sent it to everyone on the list, but I will add this... I agree with the person who said that you should stay on and be part of the discussion...and Danny too...it is VERY useful to hear all sides of an issue...many of the things you spoke of were things that I missed out on, because I was in law school at the time...but I would hear about things later on... referred to...and never knew what really happened with some folks. What you mentioned about Cesar's film being "lost" or perhaps destroyed...it's good to hear that if someone did destroy it, based on their own political views, that was obviously wrong. It helps to hear details like that... for all of us, so that we can begin to put the puzzle pieces together of why things turned out the way they did. I mentioned (privately) to you about how hurt I was with what happened to a certain close friend of mine in the union...someday I would love it if I could come to fully understand that. Anyway, I so hope that you will stay part of this...I just think this is a great way to connect, learn, vent and appreciate. I don't think there is a single person among us who doesn't absolutely just love and appreciate what Cesar and the movement gave to us...as the credit card ad says, "Priceless."

Ellen Eggers

Boycott, legal dept. 1972-1987

Elaine Elinson, 5/10/04

Why did you single out Jews?

I never once felt the sting of anti-Semitism while working with the UFW, and the anti-racist teachings of the union -- in theory and practice -- were part of what enriched all of our lives in this country where racism and ethnic scapegoating abound.

Perhaps I might have something more incisive to say about this, but right now I am profoundly saddened and feel that at least something, however minimal and inadequate, must be said to the group at large.

And, LeRoy, I feel I must ask you -- is this really a place for ethnic slurs of any kind? If so, please remove me from the list.

Wendy Greenfield, 5/10/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

I am very concerned with some of the content of this discussion, especially since my understanding is that some of this will eventually be used as part of the published documentation of the Documentation Project. Steve, I don't know you, but I agree with you that "I count my time with Union as one of the best of my life... I also recognize that imperfect people did some bad things that hurt others."

The Union, as well as each individual in it, was full of imperfections. Still, I think it's one thing to talk of some of the mistakes that were made with an interest in understanding why, and another to accuse someone like Dolores Huerta of making up a lie to fire someone. I've known and respected Dolores for many years, and I simply do not believe that is in her character.

She's given 50 years of her life to organizing, between the CSO and the UFW. During this time she's given of herself unstintingly, taught many organizers and inspired countless other people. She is not on this discussion list to defend herself. Will this list be used to make accusations without giving the person a chance to defend her/himself, which will then be used as some kind of "documentation"?

On another note, I would like to thank Elaine for bringing up the gratuitous line about "white liberals and jews" in Richard's email. Richard, I don't think you're helping your main message,

which was to emphasize the positive that was accomplished by the UFW, and putting the mistakes in context.

One of the Union's strengths was in accepting all people in the struggle who truly cared about justice for farmworkers, irregardless of their ethnic background. I join with you, Elaine, in feeling totally accepted as a Jew working in the Union, even with people who obviously had not had much contact with Jews before. The one time I heard a farmworker on the boycott say something about the "Jews killing Christ", we were able to talk about it immediately. The *fact that we had been working together for something we both believed in* helped tremendously, and that was never an issue again. I've always thought of it as a positive example of how ethnic and religious prejudices can be resolved relatively easily when there are no other economic or other power plays there to stir them up.

One of my first tasks as a fulltime organizer working with Dolores on the New York boycott was to get donations for a farmworker Passover seder. I went around to Kosher butchers, asking for donations of chickens for matzoh ball soup for striking farmworkers from CA. People responded very positively, and it was a delightful experience in solidarity and cross-cultural sharing. (It's also one of my favorite Passover stories, since I volunteered my mother to make the matzoh balls for 100 people, and she had her own adventures with that.)

All this to say that if this discussion list is to last until December, I hope that people proceed with respect for all the people who gave of themselves for this cause, whether we're talking of certain individuals or ethnic groups.

Wendy Greenfield

Boycott volunteer in NY (1968-71)

Construction crew in Delano (1971)

Boycott staff in NY (1973-74)

Boycott volunteer in San Jose and Oakland (1974-75, 80's)

Coert Bonthius, 5/10/04

RE: Documentation Project

It is amazing to see the words and hear the emotion from everyone after all these years. The fact is that so many of us, devoted so much of our lives for such an important cause that did not lead where we all hoped it would; to a successful, powerful national union of farm workers who would shine a beacon of light for poor people the nation over.

The reasons for that failure I think are many and varied. It was not just Cesar, or Prop 14 or any other single cause. Like anything human-made it was fraught with imperfection . . . everyone of us included. For instance, I think to some extent everyone in the UFW bought into the deification of Cesar and with it the notion that he could not be wrong. When people began to realize that he could be and he was wrong, and that he was accountable to almost no one, it began to break down.

I was one of those who left in 1977 because of my frustration with La Paz; my anger at the red-baiting, name calling and finger pointing that followed the defeat of Prop 14; my feeling that all of it was so completely unnecessary and self-destructive; and my belief that the organizational structure provided the base, farm workers, no real voice for change or hope.

Nonetheless, my time in the UFW solidified in me a commitment to work for social justice through the labor movement. I learned so much from Mack and Diana Lyons, Fred Ross, Jim Drake, Eliseo Medina, indirectly from Cesar and Dolores (since I never worked with them), and most importantly from the dozens of farm workers and white, black and brown liberals I met on the Boycotts and in the fields of Florida, Ohio and California. It truly was a moment in history, it did some good, it empowered many people, it took on the bosses and the corporate power structure and I am proud to have been part of it.

It seems for the documentation project there are so many areas that would be interesting to explore; from the relations between the UFW and other farm worker efforts of the time across

the country, to the nature of the boycott work in major cities across the country, to the incredible and almost never again created national alliances between church, labor and poor peoples organizations; to the truly unique role the farm workers movement played in regional and local radical movements of the time. Lots to talk about. I hope it gets talked about for posterity.

Coert Bonthius (1972-1977: Florida, Ohio and California)

Susan Drake, 5/10/04 (2)

RE: Susan Drake 1962-1973 – more on Jews

Cesar once told me, either in 1971 or '72 while I was his secretary that the two groups who he could depend on to help the union were the Jews and the Irish. Of course I'd just told him I was half Jewish and Jim was Irish, but he named Kathy Murguia, Marshall, can't remember who else as people he could also count on.

Since Richard is Chavez family, it's beautiful that he defends the family so fiercely; it's sad that he still feels anger toward a block or two of people...which is why we need to continue holding this vast 800 of us together: to make sure that rage isn't justified.

Susan

Richard Cook, 5/10/04

RE: Fred Ross and the Book that Wasn't

The comments abt Fred Ross put me in mind of the following events:

In 1982 or so, while we were living in Salinas during Barbara's residency at Natividad and my brief tenure directing the NFWM (after Chris Hartmire), Bruce Hanson of the Center for Community Change in DC, told me he had funding to do a book by Fred Ross. He asked me to find someone to type up the manuscript as Fred produced it. This led to several visits that I had with Fred in Marin County. Fred was always engaging and stimulating and enthusiastically showed me the little one-person trampoline he used for exercise. I wonder that he did not take a header off that thing. Anyway, the book project came to nothing because of a rather major mistake I made in selecting the transcriber of the manuscript. This was in the days when word processing was just getting off the ground. I talked to two or three people who offered to do the typing and I picked one who had an Exxon word processor - a machine that was not compatible with anything else. The second problem - discovered well into the project - was that the transcriber had religious scruples about typing certain words. God became G-D in her finished product. I don't recall how often Fred had occasion to need to use G-D in his book, but it was enough to take the air out of the whole thing.

Richard Cook
NFWM (1972-84 [give or take])

Patty Park (Proctor), 5/10/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

Friends:

Anti Semitism and racism were never part of the union I supported and then had the privilege to work for.

If Marshall was an informant he did a hell of a job for the union. Canada - the true north strong and free - was organized by Marshall Ganz and Jessica Govea. . (with many of us remembering the contributions of Hub Segur, Jerry and Juanita Brown and Marion Moses) I think Toronto my home town was number 4 or 5 in grape shipments. The Canadian boycott mattered to union contracts.

Marshall and Jessica personified the union. They represented the same values that Cesar personified to all of us. The hope of a union where farmworkers chose their union and ran it.

Here we did our best in the union at building community and understanding and a lot of picket lines. We worked hard at getting those damn grapes and lettuce off the shelves.

I was privileged to work for the UFW. What I remember is:

The organizers got our attention and made us listen

The story of injustice was compelling

Cesar personified the values

And someone asked "So, can you help"

Let us be honest about what happened. (I had left by 1975, before Prop 14.) It matters to the understanding of what we did right and where the growers and their allies held back justice for farmworkers.

Perhaps our thoughts will be helpful today and the in the continuing struggle.

Patty Park (Proctor) Gores Landing, Ontario
Canada

Theresa Bonpane, 5/10/04

RE: Documentation Project

i would like to reiterate that blase and i still feel that the ufw, and in particular our relationship with cesar, was one of the most inspiring times of our lives. we still hold dear a picture of us with him (and paul shrade) in our home and feel he made a tremendous impact not only in our lives, but in the lives of peace and justice groups throughout the country. to critique is not negative unless the motive is to destroy, in my opinion. i am still a supporter of ufw, and the cause of the farmworkers and hope to always be so. theresa bonpane

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/10/04 (2)

RE: WORDS FROM THE MODERATOR

WORDS FROM THE MODERATOR

I need to remind all participants about the purpose and the ground rules for this private discussion group.

Our purpose is to document the farmworkers movement 1962-1993 so that future readers can learn from our discussion about one of the most important social/ civil rights movement in the history of our country. Our purpose is not to hurl charges, make personal attacks, settle old scores or fight among ourselves about old shop worn issues.

I said in the beginning – and I say again – this discussion group is not a chat room or a gossip forum.

We all know from personal experience how easy it is to hurt other people, even people we love dearly, by the use of e-mails that are dashed off in the spur of the moment or when we are in a snit or feel attacked. How many times have I pushed the SEND button and regretted it? And if you are one of those I hurt, I apologize again for it.

The farmworker documentation project is important not only for ourselves personally (and our children) but thousands of future readers who want to learn from - and learn about - Cesar Chavez and his farmworker movement.

I ask each one of you to step back, take a moment, and think about what we are trying to accomplish here. Name calling, snide comments, racial remarks and sarcastic words are not going to achieve the goal of helping others learn from our participation in the farmworker movement.

LET'S MAKE A FRESH START, SHALL WE?

We will revisit some of the valuable points made during the past 24 hours - but not right now. We need to think more about them, regain our objectivity and return again at a later date. (Don't worry, I won't forget about it because these are important issues and besides, I don't agree with a lot of what has been said and I need to get my own 2 cents in.)

I OFFER A NEW TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION: the role of the worker-priest.

Even though I was present from 1963-1973, I never fully appreciated (or understood) the role of the California Migrant Ministry in the development of the farmworker movement until I read all the essays of the documentation project. I offer the opinion that without the creation of the worker-priest program (others might have a different name for it), there would have been no strike in 1965, and for sure, no boycott!

(Please forgive my preaching in this much-too-long email. but I'm sure you understand what I am trying to say.)

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/10/04

RE: Moving on

Kathy Lynch Murguia (1965-1983)

We all brought so much of our beliefs, values and a personal sense of truth, justice and integrity when we chose to become a volunteer for the farmworkers. This was good and it created a great movement which was transformed into a Union. And today in response to LeRoy's prompts, we are examining what happened. The Union goes on and there is still much to be done.

We never changed our beliefs etc. because of our experience with the UFW and this is also good, and we have continued on. There was much I didn't understand, and ultimately didn't expect to understand. It was truly beyond me, and it wasn't about sensibility.

Process is healthy and for those who have things to say, let it be said; to be heard. Maybe something can be figured out. This is not about hurt I believe, but talking about hurt is important. I think it's about experiences; and the chain of events that form our interpretations.

I have confidence about this process. Can't explain why. Maybe in part because of what has come forth to date. This isn't about Cesar, yet it's a great deal about Cesar. When I knew Cesar he might think this was a good idea as long as it led to action. Cesar thought a lot about big ideas. I didn't have much contact with him the last fifteen years of his life. I did ask him a favor when my son Benito needed help. This was in March, just before death.. His response was what can we do to help.

Taking responsibility is important. I know there are things I could have done better. Choices I made, choices I didn't make. The world is in great need of what we all brought to the movement. We were inspired and we continue to inspire those around us because of who we are and what we learned. Que Viva La Causa. Kathy Murguia

Angie Fa, 5/11/04

Thanks for the moderating. Just want to add that I had the honor of observing the 15th anniversary reunion conference of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Summer Project volunteers in 1979, and the 20th anniversary of the 1964 Berkeley Free Speech Movement participants in 1984, and all the emotions and insights and sharing and conflicts that have come across in the emails in the past day or so, are really similar to when other groups of social movement veterans got together again in an organized setting, even decades later. People risked so much to be part of the movement, dedicated every piece of themselves to the movement, and accomplished so much, but even decades later the unfulfilled promise of what might have been still disappoints, especially as we face a political landscape where few new emerging social movements are on the horizon.

On to the role of the worker priest, I think I disagree with the statement that "without the creation of the worker-priest program... there would have been no strike in 1965". As I remember Fred's

House Meeting outline began "First there were the Filipinos..." The Filipinos had already successfully struck for higher wages in the earlier parts of the harvest, but when the harvest moved to Delano, the same growers who had earlier that season paid a higher wage wanted to pay the lower rate in Delano. I think that two forces really laid the base for turning the small 1965 strike into a powerful movement. On the one hand the incredible Filipino experience where these men like Philip Vera Cruz had come to the US hoping to get a college education, and ended up consciously being farm workers without families here, so their brothers and sisters, and nephews and nieces back home could get college educations in the Philippines. (I think Craig Scharlin's book Philip Vera Cruz is now University of Washington press. Also teaching Asian American Studies we still use the wonderful old video on the Filipinos "Dollar A Day, Dime A Dance.") On the Chicano side there was the whole infrastructure that Cesar and Dolores and Fred and so many others had already built through the CSO. The CSO had already won so many issues that are still timely today, like driver's exams in Spanish, government assistance for immigrants not yet naturalized, registered ½ a million voters, gotten citizenship and pensions for another 50,000, helped to create the Fair Employment Practices commission.

To this powerful alliance of Filipinos and Chicanos, the churches brought resources which allowed the creation of a movement. Susan Drake can say more, but Jim's work funded by the Migrant Ministry seems very important to the early days of the union. The accounts say Jim's work with Gil Padilla also out of the CSO leadership, the rent strike with 20 students helping out, laid an important base for turning the strike into a movement. Once the grape strike happened, after the students were back at college, they became an instant support network. Then the thousand dollars from the NFWM that Jim used for phone calls to build a boycott, finding places to stay for the first boycott volunteers.

I think the church resources, and funding Jim was crucial, but it was the whole outreach to students, labor unions, peace and civil rights groups, together with the critical religious support, that turned one small strike into a powerful movement supported by 17 million US consumers from all walks of life. (I also went back recently and looked at Pat Hoffman's book Ministry of the Dispossessed, Wallace Press, on the support the church provided for the farm workers and the way that involvement in the farm workers changed church members, and it gives lots of good information.)

In her very powerful essay, "Abby" Flores Rivera also had some really interesting insights about her father's experience as a Protestant farm worker. It raised issues I never thought of before about Catholic versus Protestant farm workers, although apparently those issues also sometimes arose earlier within CSO chapters.

The religious support was so important to so many boycott efforts. A friend was at the Catholic Worker when one of the boycotts arrived in NYC. She became responsible for religious outreach, said it was easy getting liberal religious types to sign on. The rabbis were also crucial; at one point they eventually got the wrong kind of lettuce declared non-kosher.

To end, there were so many wonderful clergy in the movement. For those of you who remember Fr. Bill O'Donnell who passed away last December, his sister Mary O'Donnell is collecting contributions to edit Fr. Bill's papers for preparation of a book.

Doug Adair, 5/11/04

RE: Padilla led the first UFW strike in the grapes!

In a message dated 5/11/04 . . . [Angie Fa] writes:

On to the role of the worker priest, I think I disagree with the statement that "without the creation of the worker-priest program... there would have been no strike in 1965". As I remember Fred's House Meeting outline began "First there were the Filipinos..."

Wow, what an amazing discussion, greetings to so many old friends, brothers and sisters...

With the phase-out of the bracero program in the spring of 1965, and awareness of the civil rights movement in the South, the fields of the Central Valley were full of talk of strikes in 1965. And

the success of the (mostly) Filipino crews in Coachella in getting the raise (to \$1.40/hr) was an incentive for agitation and wild cat strikes starting in June and July. It was in this context that workers at the J. D. Martin Ranch (including many union members from Earlimart - the Champion family sticks in my mind) went on strike during the pre-harvest leafing, and appealed to the union for help. It was Gil Padilla who led that strike.

Cesar had been quite sick that summer, and had not really had a chance to participate in the rising crescendo of agitation, but through the Malcriado, he and Bill Esher were spreading the word, up and down the Barrios of the Central Valley, about the impending struggle. The Malcriado put into context the strikes by AWOC members in Coachella and at El Rancho Farms in Arvin, the Tulare County Rent strike, the Exeter Dehydrator wildcat strike (it was on a picket line there that I first met Cesar, and also Larry Itliong and Ben Gines of AWOC, who all came up to see what was going on; I had been asked by the striker-friends to help on the picket line to talk (English!) to the cops and reporters).

Most of these strikes were flash-in-the-pans, and striking workers would just leave and find other work after a day or two. But Gil Padilla molded the Martin workers into a militant and solid group. He convinced the machos to leave their guns, chains, and iron bars at home; organized the house meetings that resulted in 100% solidarity, as I remember; and when the company brought in a labor contractor's crew to break the strike, organized the picketing of the labor contractor's home in Visalia, and house visits and leafleting of his crews' workers about the strike. And while the workers were demanding the extra nickel or dime, the key demand was respect. The immediate cause of the strike was lack of toilets for the women.

With all due respect to the Migrant Ministry folks, their focus that summer was on birth control, and a gas coop in Poplar, where workers could save a few cents a gallon on gas (if they drove over there). Dave Havens had a tremendous impact on my life, but was a bit of a curiosity when he arrived in the labor camps in his submarine-like Citroen, with a trunk full of vaginal foam or whatever. Certainly Jim Drake and Dave Havens were critical in helping organize the Rent Strike, and in fact Padilla was also on the Migrant Ministry payroll at the time, as I remember, but it was Padilla that could really communicate with the workers. I never worked closely with Fred Ross (or Cesar, who usually met with the Malcriado when we had made mistakes or screwed up in some way), but working with Padilla in Tulare County, in 1965, in the Texas melon strike in 1967, in the Philly grape boycott in 1970, and then in the David Freedman Co. negotiations in 1980, gave me tremendous respect for his style of organizing. He was not a charismatic speaker, certainly has no illusions about being a saint, (or that farm workers were saints!) and at different times, had serious health and family problems to deal with. But he could criticize himself and listen to criticism, open to a diversity of ideas, and could deal with a great variety of people, from farm workers and volunteers, to politicians and cardinals and labor bosses, extracting a little or a lot from each to add to the project at hand.

Prior to the negotiations in Coachella in 1980, we had gotten an outstanding contract from the David Freedman Co. in negotiations led by Eliseo Medina in 1977, but inflation had eaten up all our gains. We began organizing in the crews in the pruning and thinning in the spring, and had our demands (in our heads), but could not open negotiations until La Paz sent someone down to lead the effort. The grape harvest in Coachella is only 6 weeks, and was already well underway when Padilla finally arrived. We met with the company and presented our demands, and then the company delayed responding, said Lionel Steinberg was sick, more delays, finally met and offered us a raise of 2 cents. When Padilla came back to inform the 500 plus workers assembled in 110 degree heat after work (and more than a few drinking beer), the workers were furious, demanded an immediate strike, that the offer proved the company wasn't interested in negotiations; and when Padilla demurred, began throwing beer cans at him and booed him off the stage, told him to go back to La Paz. Those of us on the Ranch Committee tried to reason, that we had to work within the union, that the 500 workers there were the most militant, but what about the other 500?, many crews from Mexicali not represented, that we had to be organized in every crew before taking action. But the workers booed us off too, elected new leadership, including Rudy Reyes and Ahmed Shoibi, a militant Arab worker from Yemen.

After the meeting broke up, we met with Gilbert, and pleaded with him to stay, while noting that the workers had a point, it was very late in the season. And in fact, the wildcat was called off at 2 a.m. the next morning, and Padilla went on to mould the Freedmen workers into a totally solid and effective backup to his negotiations. The ranch committee and stewards would meet each afternoon, after work, and decide the action for the next day. Some days we would report to work and pick one box, and then call a meeting; or work until the 8:30 break, or for the full 8 hours, or slow down (the tortuga), or pick but not pack...

I know that day is a sore point in Padilla's memories, but to me, a leader who can come back, after a scene like that, and put things back together, not only save the situation, but win a contract almost as good as the lettuce contracts of the time.... what an amazing organizer.

Viva la Causa, Doug Adair, Thermal, Ca

Mary Mocine, 5/11/04

RE: Kindness

Dear all,

I used to be a lawyer for the union from 1975-1978. I'm now a Buddhist priest so please forgive me when I preach to you about kindness. I agree with LeRoy about taking the backward step before we send. To pause and to take a breath or two and ask oneself if what we write is not just true but also if it is truly useful, timely and kind. There is always the great practice of first writing the venting version, then deleting it and writing the sending version. Or, print the first one out and burn it as a way to let it go.

About the kindness, I'm not talking about being saccharine. I do not agree with LeRoy if I understand him correctly to be suggesting that we change the subject in some way to speak of more neutral things. I think we need to find a way to discuss these difficult issues. Postponing it or changing the subject will not make it easier. Perhaps some more ground rules would help, even though they sound "liberal." For example, how about we stop characterizing one another? It is possible to describe one's experience without calling one another names. How about the ever-popular commitment to using "I" statements so as to speak from what one actually knows? How about some self-criticism along with the expression of one's pain from others?

I think real kindness is being willing to say your truth and being willing to listen to the truth of others. For myself, I think I abdicated some of the time I worked for the union. I wanted so much to be part of something I loved and work with and for people I loved and that I was so afraid of losing that that I became afraid to speak my mind. In some odd way, the Game was liberating. I found I had survived it and felt that some of my "liberal, legal dept" guilt was washed away. But, I wish I had refused to play because I didn't think it was really useful.

* * * *

I intend to write an essay but I'm not ready yet. I just wanted to put my 2 cents in process. Please forgive the preaching.

Please take good care of yourselves,

yours, Mary Mocine

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 5/11/04

RE: Worker Priest

Fr. Victor Salandini was a priest in the San Diego Diocese who simply didn't fit in the confines of parish work and had a single-minded focus on justice, particularly when it involved farmworkers. His presence at the fields during the wildcat tomato strike in south San Diego lent credibility, and certainly helped keep the high standard of non-violence. He regularly said Mass on an ironing board and his use of tortillas for communion, though exceedingly controversial with the local bishop, made much theological sense since it was the bread of the people participating in the

ceremony. Aside from embedding the effort we were all making in a spiritual context, his tortilla Masses were amazing publicity and we (he) got coverage in Time Magazine because of it.

When Gary Brown and I married in November of 1971, we asked him to officiate since we had been working so closely together for all that time and felt that he knew us well. We invited, of course, our extended families and friends, many of whom did not agree with our participation in the movement. When it came time for the sermon at the Mass, Fr. Salandini had not a word to speak about the sanctity of the marriage commitment, etc., but only about Cesar Chavez and the UFW!! I both cringed and giggled inside at the consequence of asking a single-minded person to do something outside his vision.

Fr. Salandini had also been involved and supportive of earlier farmworker efforts to organize in Borrego Springs. I do not know much about it and I know that it never got going, but there had been efforts out there in the grapes.

I know that the Masses we had in La Paz were meaningful to me as rituals of community, bonding and easing tensions, clarifying my deeper purpose. I do not know how I would have felt if I had not shared the religious background, however.

Jackie Davis
1971-1974

Susan Drake, 5/11/04

RE: Worker Priest

As a Protestant, I, too, enjoyed and was enriched by the services at La Paz and even at the Delano Catholic Church. I wasn't so much into "churchiness" or traditions as I was in the bond that Jackie spoke of. Cesar became fascinated with ecumenism, which crept more and more into services he instigated. That eagerness to fuse Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism in services was another way he was so exemplary in his inclusionary attitude. Not only did that enhance us spiritually, but it convinced a broad spectrum of churches around the world to support La Causa. The religious facet of the movement also probably kept some of us better behaved than we might have otherwise been! :-[

Nothing to add about worker-priests; Angie did a great job. Working alongside Alfredo Vasquez, Pablo Espinoza, Nick Jones, and others in the program broadened Jim's efforts and mine. Can't remember who else was a worker-priest.

Susan

Patty Teufel, 5/11/04

RE: Documentation Project/ Chris Hartmire

Hello to all!

The Ministry part of the UFW was how I was hired. I am very interested in knowing what happened to Chris Hartmire, who was director of the Farm Worker Ministry. Does anyone have contact with him-is he still with us? I read that Richard Cook took his place awhile. Did he resign or die?? I loved this man. He helped me deal with a difficult time I once had in Dayton, Ohio while working with the UFW.. I pointed out some internal problems that were going on and he thanked me and dealt with the person involved. It was this problem that led me to another city, where I believe destiny was meant for me to be, because it was in the city of Akron, Ohio, where I met my wonderful husband to be, Ross Shriver. We are still standing and holding hands!! I also met Nancy Hickey, who had a grand reputation for her ability to have big successes at Gate Collections with the labor folks!! It was a wonderful part of my life. I had left the religious life on a leave of absence, (age 34), and joined this wonderful Farm Worker movement because it kept meaning in my life!! When I left the Union in 1976, (it was because I officially left my Religious Community, got dispensed from my vows, and situations were changing for me), Chris Hartmire had the great Class and sense of Appreciation to write a personal letter to me, thanking me for all I had done for the movement!! I believe I still have that letter!! I cherish it. I hope he has a part in

this wonderful book, because he certainly was a Great Leader and Minister and healer!! He paid me a subsistence salary of \$300/ month to live on and I felt rich, having just left my Religious Community.

I later lived in a Boycott house in Akron and helped fix it up with "ALL my Money"!! It was great sharing a place with several UFW Organizers. I was a part of something I loved.

We went on a bus trip to California (we only had 3 flat tires!!) to be there when the ALRA was passed. It was a high point in my life. I stood on the steps of the Sacramental Capitol when the bill was passed and an old farm worker came up to me and shook my hand and said "Thank you for all you've done to help us!!" It was a pivotal, moving point in my young life. It stills brings hope to my heart and a sense of having been a part of something grand and meaningful in the world!! I walked 10 miles with Cesar and a large group of farm workers and volunteers in California, making a "United Statement" about our beliefs and concerns re: the farmworkers. These were happy and glorious times and we celebrated EVERYTHING!!! All the big and small victories!

Chris Hartmire explained to me, when some picketers asked me "why the farmworkers don't practice birth control," that Children are everything to them. It brings hope and a sense of someday being able to have a better life. And everyone doesn't look upon having children as a "Draw back" in life. I was very moved by his passion and understanding for these hard working people. I still am!! I became a better person during my time with the Migrant Farm Workers. I told my community "Would that the nuns could understand and see what REAL Poverty is! Let them come work beside these people and learn a few things about life!"

Patty Teufel 1974-76

Ellen Eggers, 5/11/04

RE: Documentation Project/ Chris Hartmire

Patty: We don't know each other, but we certainly share a love and appreciation for Chris. For us and so many other people in the movement, Chris Hartmire was a major figure in our lives. I came on through the MM also, in 1972, and Chris has been my dear friend and mentor ever since. Up until last March (2003), Chris and his wife Pudge lived around the corner from me in Sacramento. David is correct that he now lives in Claremont, and is still very much an activist. For the past 10 years or more he had been working at Loaves & Fishes, a wonderful multi-service organization for the homeless. LeRoy was the director of L&F at the time Chris started with them in 1989. Chris also worked for a while with Neighbor to Neighbor in SF, with Fred Ross, Jr., but then returned to L&F. When Chris left the MM in 1980, he and Pudge moved to La Paz to work directly for the UFW. I recall that Cesar told Chris, at that time, that Chris joining the UFW staff had been an "answer to his prayers." Of course, who wouldn't want a man like Chris working directly with you. Chris was giving lots and lots of responsibility, and always rejected the idea of becoming an actual board member of the union. But Cesar and I believe Dolores strongly urged him to take the position of treasurer, after Brother Pete retired. So Chris took the position, somewhat reluctantly I suppose. However, Chris left the union altogether in March of 1989. As much as I loved Cesar, I always felt that Chris had qualities that I admired even more than Cesar. He had (and still does have!) so much grace and dignity...and wisdom. Through the national farm worker ministry, I would bet that literally thousands of volunteers came to work for the movement. I am in regular contact with Chris and he is part of this list I believe... I know that he wrote an essay for LeRoy for sure....all the best, Ellen Eggers (LA Boycott 72-75, La Paz Legal 80-87)

Gary Brown, 5/11/04

RE: Documentation Project/ Chris Hartmire

Dear All:

I'd also like to express my appreciation for Chris Hartmire. Chris was very helpful to my family and I while we were with the Union and consoled us when we reluctantly made the decision to leave the Union after believing that we would stay on forever. He encouraged me to go on and

obtain my legal degree and come back to the Union after my education. While the latter did not happen I am forever grateful for his giving me peace of mind. Chris always presented that reflective and peaceful manner that was contagious. He shared that with Cesar, though Cesar also that other side of him when he got upset. I remember Cesar being upset at the La Paz group because we were all bickering about the dog problem at La Paz while he was in Arizona. He gave us and earful on his return. But I digress. My thanks for the Farm Worker Ministry and Chris.

GARY BROWN 1969-1974 San Diego, Napa, La Paz, LA

Mike Johnston, 5/11/04

RE: Observations on our venting

I have been following this exchange with interest, and perhaps a little more distance than some, as I was very young (18) and was there before many of the more divisive events. As a relatively short term volunteer (Los Angeles 1970-1971) who went on to spend fifteen years as a rank and file activist among Teamster cannery workers and the last fifteen years as a staffer at Teamsters 890, the Salinas food processing and farmworker local (taken over in 1985 by a group of progressive Latinos) I have had both inside and outside views of the many faces of this Movement for all of my adult life. It has been a source of tremendous inspiration and frustration in my life and my work.

It seems obvious to me that many former UFW volunteers and/or staffers have had the same mixed feelings that I have had, with strong and (to us) legitimate critiques of various decisions/ actions/ policies/ strategies of the UFW of individuals within it, but have hesitated to engage in public discussion of those critiques, both because of the unpopularity of criticizing popular icons and because of a legitimate fear that our words will be used against a movement that we love. I was not too surprised, therefore, that this was one of the first threads to surface when we got a relatively safe place to talk. Given how long some have been holding this stuff in, the level of strong personal feeling is no surprise, either.

At the same time, the UFW still exists, and in their own, imperfect way, continue to struggle to advance the cause of farmworkers, and one of the principal assets that they have is Cesar's status as an icon, practically a saint in the popular culture. Given the strength of the UFW's foes and the limits on their assets, it comes as no surprise that the organization and many who love it respond so vigorously to anything that could in any way be viewed as a criticism of Cesar or his work, no matter how well-founded. Cesar (and Dolores and Philip and many more) are heroes, and we have precious few-heroes.

This contradiction is real, folks, between the need to honestly examine the strengths and weaknesses of our work and the very practical need that the Latino movement in general and the UFW in particular have to preserve Cesar's iconic status. Both needs are valid and we need to recognize that.

I have been investigating grievances and incidents and accidents for thirty years now, and one of the constants that I have observed is that always and everywhere if you ask four people what happened, you will get four stories, even if everyone is telling the truth.

My point is, I do not really care if Dolores told a lie to get Steve fired. I have worked with Dolores and been screamed at by her. I know she is no saint. I know that she is a brilliant organizer who has dedicated her life to the farmworkers movement and accomplished more so far than most of us will ever hope to. I know that she has made big mistakes and I know that she has a temper that is a force of nature. I never knew Steve, but on the face of it I value the work that he did as well.

We don't have to pretend that everything was always love and peace. It was not. There will be some venting, it is natural, but I think that we have to avoid personalizing it and focus on what we can learn. To that end, I would suggest that we avoid addressing our responses to one or another individual who has written to the list.

Finally, I have some particular suggestions for questions that come out of this thread.

What can we learn about how we balance the tremendous power that comes from having charismatic, strong-willed leaders, willing to take on impossible fights, with the need, as an organization grows, to have open dialogue and leaders arising from below? I believe it to be clear that the UFW would never have come into existence or advanced as it did without those leaders or others with similar qualities. At the same time, I believe that the organization's chronic tendency to centralize power was ultimately something that limited it tremendously. This is not a rare or isolated phenomenon and I think it would bear discussion, if we can find a civil and productive way to do so.

The second question that I would like to see tackled at some point is the curious dynamic that emerged in this organization that had a brilliance for finding a way for any volunteer, whether priest or red, PhD or farmworker, to contribute to a movement for empowerment. Not surprisingly, the volunteers felt ownership of their work and wanted to be empowered within it. Not surprisingly, questions of race and class emerged, and you could argue either way as to how much power in the organization the volunteers, who did the work but were by and large from outside the farmworker world, should have had. Is this dynamic inevitable in an organization that relies on outside volunteers? How much power should such volunteers have, and in what areas?

An observation that I have long made that bears on these questions is that I see the UFW as simultaneously one of the most and least democratic of organizations in the labor movement. They have historically been phenomenal at involving workers in the day to day life of the union. On Election Day, they are always the folks with the most people knocking on doors in Salinas today, even with a reduced base. At the same time, their leadership and decision making process is enormously centralized and has at times been very threatened by criticism from below. (I see this from the opposite perspective of the Teamsters, a union in which the members regularly replace their leaders, but have almost nothing to do with the day to day running of the union.) Which kind of participation is really more important? Do we have to choose? What in the history of the UFW moved it in this direction?

These are very real questions for organizers. Let's get through the venting and find a way to learn together.

Peace

Mike Johnson
Los Angeles Boycott 1970-1971
Currently Teamster Local 890, Salinas

Stephen Rivers, 5/11/04

RE: Observations on our venting

Since my name has now come up twice in reference to what happened after the defeat of Prop 14, I'd like to clarify the tiny piece of the record that applies to me. I don't recall Dolores blaming me for her being late to events during the campaign, and although I left La Paz after Thanksgiving, I came back at Cesar's request in early 1977 to work on the LA boycott (which I did until the end of that year when I left the UFW to work for Tom Hayden's Campaign for Economic Democracy).

I stayed in touch with Cesar, Dolores, Richard, etc. over the years, and was just with Dolores in March at a memorial event in Mass. For a longtime UFW supporter, Father Brian Boland (I picked her up at the airport, and we were both on time).

Most importantly, I agree with what LeRoy wrote last night, and I hope that we can find the ways and words to remember and honor each other and everyone who worked in the cause, from Cesar on down.

Carlos LeGerrette, 5/11/04

RE: Help!

Does anyone remember the Chicken Shit Committee?

Carlos & Linda LeGerrette
('66-'78)

Marshall Ganz, 5/12/04

RE: Help!

I do remember the Chicken Shit Committee (CSC), but can't remember what it was for. Since Carlos asked about it, it must have been during his and Linda's tenure at La Paz. It might have been a "complaints" committee of some kind???

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/12/04

RE: Help!

I remember it too. And it was something at La Paz – probably in the late 70's if it was during the time Carlos and Linda were there . . . There was a big focus on setting rules that people within the La Paz community could live with – someone in an earlier post mentioned the big uproar over dogs running loose at La Paz. . . There was also a housing committee which dealt with housing assignments in an effort to try to not have that be a purely political process – there were guidelines set up to balance union seniority with need for housing assignments, and people had to submit a bid if they wanted to move into a room/ trailer/ house that was opening up.

Terry (Vasquez) Scott
1973-1988

Boycott (LA 73-75; Seattle, St. Louis, Kansas City, Detroit 79-80), various assignments at La Paz

Will Kirkland, 5/12/04

RE: Help!

The Chicken Shit Committee

It was set up in late 74 through 75 I think at the request of CC, to deal with the petty complaints in La Paz that were going to him. Esther Padilla was the jefa, Jim Hirst, Kent Winterrowd and maybe a few others were on it. If someone was aggrieved by doggie caca, unwashed dishes, late night carousing, etc. etc. he/ she took it to the committee. The committee tried to get the complainer and complaineé to come to terms and if they couldn't the committee handed down an edict. Folks not living around La Paz wouldn't have known about it except as chismes from those who thought it high good humor that the La Paz drones needed a comite to live together. This account comes from Hirst who is out of e-mail touch but has a voice in yours truly.

Will Kirkland

La Paz, Sanger, Fresno, Calexico, San Francisco.... 1974-1976

Georgia McFadden Lyga, 5/12/04

RE: Worker Priests

For Catholicism "worker priests" came about in the 60s and I believe originated in France. It was an effort to "engage" a "Catholic country" in its faith since no one attended Mass. The priests took factory jobs in order to work with the people and find out why no one went to church. Rome did not look kindly on it.

It dribbled over into the convents after Vatican II, and I know several Maryknoll Sisters in Latin America who took factory jobs in order to "reach" the women. Someone with a better memory than I can probably do better!

Jean Eilers, 5/12/04

RE: Article on "worker priest movement"

From: Jean Eilers – UFW – 1976-'81; Delano, Coachella, San Ysidro, La Paz -

I was part of the Migrant Ministry too but the great part about it was Chris really saw that we followed the same guidelines as the UFW volunteers.

[Reprint of article, "Fr. Jacques Loew: Spawned the Worker-Priest Movement," by Felix Corley, *London Times*, February 27, 1999].

Patty Teufel, 5/12/04

RE: finding Chris/ worker priests

This is an interesting piece of information, Georgia. Never knew or heard of that about "worker priests". Sounds like someone was trying hard in France to spread the Good News or help fill the Churches anyways.

Also thanks to all you kind friends who responded and helped put me in touch with Chris Hartmire. He is still with us and I hope he gets his two cents worth in on all this stimulating conversation. Chris was a Mighty Force in the Ministry and effected many lives, as several of you have already testified. Leroy is getting plenty of information so far to sufficiently confuse him and get his juices roaring!! Long live those who HOWL AT THE MOON!!! MAY WE KEEP OUR SENSE OF HUMOR THROUGH ALL THIS!!!

Patty Teufel – (Dayton, Akron and Columbus, Ohio – 1974-76)

Chris Schneider, 5/12/04

RE: Help!

I recall the "Chicken Shit Committee" term, and believe that Will Kirkland's explanation is correct. I didn't arrive at La Paz until 1977 and I recall it being set up sometime after I got there.

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/12/04

RE: Documentation Project – Worker Priests

Kathy Lynch Murguia (1965-1983) Delano, Bakersfield, Oxnard, San Francisco, Los Angeles, La Paz, Cleveland, Detroit,

In Lupe's and my essay, we talk about the worker priests and our experience in the movement. Lupe was also a worker priest. The article Jean e-mailed provides great information on the French experience. In 1960 I met Fr. Jaques Valentin who was in the French Worker Priest movement. He was a physicist at the Rad Lab at Berkeley, and his role in the French Underground and later as a worker priest was fascinating. He ministered to French prostitutes in Paris, and ultimately worked with them to establish an Order. The idea of going among the working poor and being a witness and ministering to them, working side by side, sharing their struggles and in effect empowering them with the words of the Gospels goes back to the early days of the Church before the Nicene Creed. Anyone read the Gnostic Gospels and Beyond Belief by Elaine Pagels?

Lupe worked with Pablo, Alfredo. etc. and with Chris, Jim and Phil where they had retreats and spent time reviewing the Gospels and the message re: service and non-violence etc, Lupe's Catholicism matured as he involved himself in this. Could say a lot more.... Kathy

Kathie Olguin Smoot, 5/12/04

RE: Worker priests

Kathy Olguin Smoot - I enjoyed reading everyone's thoughts about Fred Ross, I was not so blessed to have worked with him, but his influences were everywhere in the leaders of the Grape Boycott I did work with, Delores, Vivian, Sharon, oh yeah, and Venustiano!

I was blessed to have known Fr. Bill O'Donnell very well. Without his help, and that of many of his friends, our Boycott organizers might have had to hitch-hike sometimes, not that we wouldn't have. Someone he knew, and sadly I've forgotten who, always came up with a donated vehicle when one was needed. I especially remember a It. blue Dodge station wagon, mid-50s probably, does anyone remember what happened to it? After Salinas, I think it went back to the Boycott, but

who knows. Fr. Bill was also an inspiring character on the picket line, not being a small person, he always stood out. He always wore his collar, and that attracted more attention than his stature. He did something for Venustiano and I that was way "above and beyond". He agreed, actually was eager, to perform our Wedding Mass in my parents backyard, where we could have a Huelga Mass. We hadn't asked, but were pretty sure, the local parish wouldn't let us bring our politics into the church. Although we didn't broadcast it, we didn't hide it either. Later, somehow, the bishop got word and Fr. Bill was passed over for a parish the next year. He did get his parish, about 5 years later I think, St. Joseph the Workman in Berkeley (or is that "North Oakland"?). A few years ago, Venustiano told me they had spent some time together. I had hoped to do the same, and was heartbroken when I heard from my sister that he had passed away. I hope not to let any more of those opportunities get by...anyway, I have the greatest picture of Fr. Bill and Vivian Levine, and I will have it scanned along with some others so they can be shared...Hey, moderator LeRoy, what about that? can we do that? remember, these new-fangled computer-things are hard for some of us dinosaurs!!

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/13/04

RE: Role of the CMM Kathy Murguia

The question of whether the Union would have survived without the Ministry's involvement???? That's a heady consideration. I know my initial involvement came from having done some shed work and then being connected with Citizens For Farm Labor where I came in contact with Hank Anderson (Harvest of Loneliness- Story of the Bracero Program» Ann Draper from the ILGWU who was a staunch supporter of AWOC, Dorothy Kaufman (Legrette), Bob Callagy both of whom were associated with the Catholic Worker Movement.. This was in 1964. I recall taking a trip to Oxnard with Bob Callagy and Ann Draper in a follow up protest rally regarding the elimination of the Bracero Program which did come to an end in that year..

However it was through my association with the NFWA, I felt willing to make that huge leap of commitment. I believe it had to do with the ideology of volunteerism that resonated with my notions about my faith. It created a rational basis for the economic sacrifices that everyone, strikers and volunteers, had to make to allow the Union to "take off." It also gave a sense of moral righteousness that wasn't politically based, and could be asserted on the basis of a spiritual mandate regardless of faith. It was also supportive of the churches/ synagogues relating to the labor community.

The notion of being a witness, and working side by side to empower farmworkers using personal and professional skills as they were needed (typing, translating, advocating, etc.) was in my mind a non-political posturing. Bill Esher (El Malcriado) was a model of this.

However this belief system of volunteerism may have outlived itself by the 1975/76. We had \$ coming in from the grants (Ramona Holguin), and it wasn't clear what was going on. And it was questionable I believe whether the Union could support salaried positions for everyone. I was really on the fringe in those years. Lupe remained with the NFWM which did add a sense of security, although it was a subsistence budget where we received money to pay our bills as opposed to having the Union pay them. I remember working in Casa, La Paz Day Care, and recruited Sister Florence to come to La Paz to run the National Farm Worker Health Group.

I was saddened to hear that Jacques Levy passed on. He was working on a book regarding Cesar's ideas re: cooperatives. Anyone know if he completed it? I saw him at a conference Hub Segur and Susan Drake organized.

Just some thoughts.

Marc Coleman, 5/13/04

RE: to my old friends

I didn't participate in the documentation project for reasons described below, but so many of my old friends have been writing in, sharing their thoughts, it's sent me back nearly 30 years and this forum seems right. So I want to add my few drops to this ocean of experience.

for me, the experience from 1975-77, mostly in La Paz, but also in the thick of the election organizing campaigns, the boycott communities, the Prop 14 signature gathering, even the Brown for President primary forays was so intense, rich and personal that I struggled unsuccessfully with how to write an essay. And the experience, in particular the time I got to spend with and around Cesar seems at once both personal and communal, too large and varied to contain in an essay, and too intense to adequately describe except to those who were there. So I admire those of you who could figure out how to do it.

But the list offers some specific focus so for what it's worth.

On Cesar's legacy. I agree both with the need to be honest and the need to protect the legacy. I get Richard Ybarra's fear that who Cesar was and what his life stood for will now be trampled as disgruntled ex-staffers get a forum. But the fact is that Cesar trusted us with everything - the boycott, the organizing, the union, his health. As one of the UFW mechanics, I was acutely aware of this at the time. I mean people wanted to kill him and he literally needed to be mobile, secret and protected all the time. So now, for better or worse, we're entrusted to some extent with his memory. Quite honestly the biggest threat I've seen is the widespread attempt by the petty bureaucrats to turn Cesar into some kind of Mother Theresa, "he's the model of community service" crap. Forget unions, forget justice, forget farmworkers, forget organizing. At a recent Cesar Chavez day event I went to, the guest minister told the crowd that he had researched Cesar's life and finally figured out where Cesar had learned to organize. IT WAS THE NAVY. Eliseo Medina (guest speaker) was there as was Amelia Nieto and my wife Shelly Spiegel and we about fell off our chairs.

On attrition

I came to La Paz in April 1975 as the second car mechanic. Ken Hlavic was the first and Carlos and Linda headed up the transportation dept with Ken's wife-to-be Wendy as the assistant. I remember out of curiosity watching the attrition rate through our "fire watch" rosters. Fire watch was the very popular turn everyone took a couple nights a week for a couple hours patrolling the perimeter of La Paz with a flashlight and a walkie-talkie looking for people who might be attempting to sneak onto the compound. Anyway there was a weekly or monthly list of everyone who lived in La Paz and I remember noticing from time to time how significant the attrition rate was by comparing one list with the next. Seems like we changed about 60% in one year's time. So I don't think the attrition rate post Prop 14 was particularly different.

On the Game

I always felt the mechanics enjoyed what we lawyers call "qualified immunity." I mean - do you want your car fixed or not? And I had come to the UFW as an antiwar activist and draft resister from Berkeley. So I had seen left factionalism and sectarianism up close and it was pretty ugly. When the Game was introduced to us at one of our weekly community meetings, it was presented as a way to break down barriers and get at certain interpersonal difficulties that may have been bogging the work down. There was a triangle and a circle. The triangle represented the work organization structure, with Cesar at the top. The circle represented the Game with everyone being equal. I think everyone at La Paz who played the Game (and we were all required to do so) understood, as the Buffalo Springfield said, that "some were more equal than others." In the circles where Cesar was present, I never heard anyone attempt to "game" him.

For those who don't know, basically a group of 7-10 people would sit in a circle and someone would criticize a person in the circle. If it wasn't picked up on by someone else (or maybe you needed two more) the criticism would move on to someone else until the right number of people chimed in and "the game" was on. Mind you this was originally designed to break down the defenses of drug addicts. So the hapless person being "gamed" would have to listen to 15 minutes or so of everything people could think of about how rotten the person was. Defending one's self just invited more misery so it was best just to let it roll. Compared to other things I had seen previously, like "criticism/ self-criticism," the Game, at least as it got started, seemed rough, but not devastating. Until later. . . .

Prop 14

The signature gathering was one exhausting, exhilarating experience. Other more knowledgeable people have explained the political underpinnings. As it was explained to us at our weekly meetings, Cesar and the Board waited to no avail until there were only 60 days left, hoping that the Union could be spared the expense and burden of doing an initiative to restore funding to the ALRB. When the time came, I sent Cesar a memo saying I knew how to collect signatures and raise money at the same time based on my training from People's Lobby and work on the Air War Vote initiative in 1972 in Alameda County. Cesar called me in and the next thing I knew I was head of training for Southern California under Marshall. Fred Ross Sr. took Northern Cal. Recalling everyone we could from the boycott, we fielded 200 people a day. It was great – we took over a seminary in Compton, had nightly organizing meetings for all hands with regional daily reports and then met until all hours of the night in Marshall's heads of regions meeting. At the end of 30 days we had collected 729,000 signatures and raised, if memory serves, a couple hundred thousand dollars for the Union. We were so high.

The weeks and months leading up to the election were frustrating and demoralizing as the reality of winning electoral campaigns in California began to sink in. We and our organizing talents had no place. As great as we were in direct people-to-people work, we were no match for the dollar-freighted campaign by Agribusiness. California was just too big to win a statewide election based on people-to-people activity. The instilling of fear by the growers (farmworkers climbing into your bedroom) and the complexity of the issue with the ALRB and elections and funding plus the built in 7-9% of the vote that goes negative no matter what the issue proved insurmountable.

So the defeat was crushing – in large part because the signature gathering process was such a rush and so affirming of the UFW.

Then the Game came to be used in a pretty destructive way. In spring, 1977, several people from Delano were summoned to La Paz for our community meeting. Whatever seeds had been planted, it became clear that the Delano folks had been invited up to be fired. Cesar used a Game approach to attack various of the people and some pre-briefed La Paz people joined in. The whole thing seemed orchestrated. Attempting to defend oneself was as useless as in the regular Game. Of course the Delano people didn't understand what was going on. Among the casualties was my wife now of 23 years, Shelly Spiegel, principal of the Huelga school in Delano, who I really didn't know at the time. I'm not sure if that's when Steve Hopcraft also went.

On volunteering

Some have written with regret about what they saw and knew and "allowed" to go on. I don't know. We were caught up in a time and space and a fierce loyalty – to Cesar, to the Union, to the values, to the nobility of our common purpose. Although I was present at the meeting, it has never occurred to me to apologize for not speaking up at the time. It would have made no difference. I have no doubt I would have been fired on the spot – mechanic or not. And, rightly or wrongly, I was not a farmworker. I was a guest in someone else's home. I served at the pleasure of the UFW leadership and I have been quickly disabused of any idea that I should have some kind of say in running things. That, for me anyway, was fine.

I also have no doubt that there were people out to destroy Cesar and the union. It saddens me to learn that there was organizing on the boycott for other left causes or parties. Honestly, although I visited most if not all the boycott locations in California on the mechanics' bimonthly Valiant repair circuit, I never saw or heard of it. Who had the time?

La Paz was like a family. Cesar and the entire Chavez family welcomed us into their lives. I especially remember the late Linda Rodriguez (Lu) (Artie's wife) who was such a caring and beautiful person – but really the entire family. And Carlos and Linda, the Wendys, Ken, Eliseo, Marshall, Kathy, Mark Pitt who I lived with in Delano, Jessica, the Winterrowds, Will, Olivia Herrera and Amelia Nieto, Artie, Chris and the so many others I had the rare fortune to work with and learn from.

And it's nice to hear from you again.

Marc Coleman

(1975-77; La Paz, Delano)

Carlos LeGerrette, 5/13/04

RE: Cesar's Presentation Regarding Worker Priests

For any of the group, if you want to read some wonderful history regarding the background and beginning of worker priests beginning with the NFWA, I can send you a presentation Cesar made back in March, 1968. There are references to the early priests, and the Migrant Ministry. It is great reading.

Email me and I'll send the attachment.

AND,

not taking anything away from the men, I would like to state how tremendously impressed I was with the great contributions of the Catholic Sisters and other religious women officially representing their faiths. The Sisters were wonderful sisters!

Carlos LeGerrette
('66-'78, SD Boycott, La Paz, San Ysidro)

Danny Ybarra, 5/13/04

RE: Cesar's Presentation Regarding Worker Priests

Thanks brother.

Gary Brown, 5/13/04

RE: Documentation Project – Worker Priests

Hello everyone:

A couple of thoughts.

First on the worker priests. I do not recall priests that actually worked the fields and factories. However, there is some examples of Roman Catholic priests who let's say could not or were not as suitable for the parish mold. Many of these priests found ministry in other ways. This might be more true of the diocesan priests.

Fr. Victor Salindini, an intellectual, dedicated a good deal of his life to ministry to the farm workers. He was present in Borrego Springs California, a small community in eastern San Diego County. Cesar was arrested there in an incident that led to a legal case that allowed union organizers access to labor camps. He remained involved and was the Tortilla priest who in San Diego gave communion using corn tortillas, a big enough issue to make Time magazine. Fr. Salindini wasn't your typical parish priest. He fit in much better in the fields.

I was in La Paz in the early days. My wife Jackie was the first telephone operator. There were a lot of matters that needed to be resolved as the population grew in La Paz. Volunteers would just appear. Volunteers staked out living quarters on a first come basis. My bed consisted of two lockers laid on their side, with a mattress. This was in the basement of the hospital. We were able to snag a rocking chair that must have sat outside for all the years the place was vacant. A little upholstery and we had our first two pieces of furniture. Dogs were a problem because as the population grew so did the number of four footed companions. Dog lovers and dog haters all living together in a big old hospital whose radiator pipes banged all night. Then there was the cafeteria. At first everyone just went to the kitchen and made their own breakfast lunch and dinner. That got too crowded so there was an attempt at setting up a revolving schedule. Where some cooked for all, but that ran into a glitch when all the vegetarians seemed to show up in the kitchen when all the meat eaters ended up in the chow line and vice versa.

Then the guards decided they needed guns. Whoa! I guess that could have gone to committee, but we didn't have one. The guards just decided among themselves. So the community meeting got

lively on that one. Which guard was it that wouldn't open the gate to our neighbor rancher that had access to La Paz?

My recollection was that there was no governing committee. We had community meetings that were all well behaved until Cesar and all the brass left. They went to Arizona. Remember Cesar fasted there. While we were having a battle royal back in La Paz he was carrying on the movement. I think it was Blase Bonpane that had the task of being in charge. I think we would have worked it all out except for the fact that we were all non-violent. Cesar was pissed off when he came back. Let everyone know how unhappy he was about all the fussing, but really it was nothing more than growing pains. We left La Paz in the big exodus to the boycott so I do not know about the Chicken Shit committee but I could imagine.

Yet, La Paz was a wonderful place during all that. There really was a community growing there. We shared pregnancies of our friends, births of our children and, even in the short time we were there, the deaths of our co-workers as if we had known them all our lives. My daughter was born a La Paz, well we lived at La Paz, she was born in Bakersfield, but we don't have the heart to tell her. Everyone congratulated us on our first born, as if we brought this child into their family. We hardly knew these people who came from all over the map but you would have not known that had you been in La Paz. I remember that we were all in The Cause together, and in some ways the first few to arrive in La Paz had their own little La Causa.

GARY BROWN, 1969-1974 San Diego, Napa, La Paz, LA

Kevin Michael Brown, 5/13/04

RE: Guards and Guns

This went to Gary, but didn't make it to the group.

Since I was one of the guards and also lived with Cesar for a brief time in La Paz, I feel I should address the point that my good friend (no relative, but I wouldn't have minded) Gary brought up.

It wasn't the guards that decided we "needed" guns and I won't go into too much detail about who DID decide, but let it be known that it was very high up and the guns were purchased NOT with UFW or NFWSC funds.

Namaste,

Kevin Michael Brown (nee James Joseph Finnegan)

1969-70 Detroit Boycott, then Salinas/Watsonville Strike, Delano Clinic Construction, Personal Assistant/ short-term roomie of CEC/ La Paz Security/ North Building window repair/ "Huelga" (dog, not the strike) handler.... Left UFW about 1973-4 ????? J

Angie Fa, 5/13/04

RE: FW: Discussion Topics

It doesn't have to be right away, but at some point could we discuss topics about Children and the Movement? The themes of people raising and sustaining (or not sustaining) kids in the movement have come up many times now. Especially the ideas of:

- (1) **What worked well in trying to balance both parenting children and building the movement?** (I wistfully remembered how I think the UFW kids were sent off to Jane Fonda and Tom Hayden's ranch for camp when one of the big UFW conventions was being done in the 1970s recently, as I tried to balance being a single mom of 2 and juggling logistics for a union convention).
- (2) **What kinds of sacrifices did the kids and parents make?** (I remember during Prop 13 that some of the top Bay Area campaign leadership went for what seemed like months without seeing their kids. John Hartmire did an incredibly thoughtful piece in Newsweek 7/24/2000 where he remembers what it was like growing up inside the movement.)

(3) **What inspirations were there?** (Don't know how Dolores did it all. Just by itself her work is so amazing, but then when you add on all the kids, what an awesome superwoman. I remember her being very, very pregnant and easily climbing onto a flatbed truck and giving such a dynamic speech...)

(4) **How do you keep the legacy alive, and ties to the movement for the kids and grandkids?** (Fr. Bill O'Donnell baptized both my kids and I took the 9 year old to the memorial service so he would have some sense of Fr. Bill and the union's legacy, he's been to endless picket lines and marches, and a farm worker convention or two when he was tiny, but movements are so often just abstract things in the textbook separated from the realities of everyday life). Thanks! Angie Fa 1976, 1979

Vickie Lopez, 5/13/04

RE: Documentation Project – Worker Priests

I agree with Gary about the wonderful sense of community at La Paz. That was my experience although I did not arrive until August 1977 (shortly after the purge). I had never before experienced such a sense of acceptance from everyone, and the satisfaction of being part of a team who were committed to working together for “la causa.” The community meetings were a hoot. People gave reports about what was going on, we wrote and performed skits, welcomed new recruits and discussed all that was relevant to us. Although we worked hard, there were always community gatherings, weddings, baptisms, births (who was it that was ready to deliver her baby, but La Paz was completely flooded in, so she had to be taken to Tehachapi in the fire truck?).

The best celebrations were always for Cesar’s birthday.

Vickie Lopez 1977-1981 (La Paz and Salinas)

Mark Silverman, 5/14/04

RE: FW: Personal and confidential

I agree with Wendy [Greenfield]. We should be very careful about any information that may go out publicly. We need to keep all the good that the union has represented in perspective in this discussion in terms of what is said “outside the family.”

Mark

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/14/04

RE: Keeping it in the family?

Mark, don’t know what Wendy said so it’s hard to respond to this advice. The family got pretty huge and boundaries blurred. Enmeshment could become problematic to the open airing of issues. My feeling is that volunteers should say what they feel needs to be said. For instance, the gun issue and the guy who didn’t let the nice rancher friend in. Do we clarify that event or just let it go in that this “nice” guy was called on his attempt to assault a volunteer who recently had a hernia operation? I say let some of the facts as we know it stand for themselves. Kathy Murguia (1965-1983).

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/14/04

RE: Keeping it in the family?

[Marc Coleman] wrote:

Speaking of airing the laundry. Does anyone know the status of a book that was being written by a university professor in Texas on Cesar and the Union? Apparently he had access (or claimed to) to Executive Board tapes and God knows what from Wayne State or similar archives. He called Shelly and me a few years ago but we declined to talk to him. I had heard somewhere the book was close to print.

Hi:

My info on this topic is based solely on reading LeRoy's essay- I have no direct knowledge of it. But, in his essay for the project, LeRoy stated that "the documentation project began on November 25, 2002 with a letter from Professor Paul Henggeler, Associate Professor of History, University of Texas - Pan American." The professor wrote to LeRoy that, "For six years now, I have been researching material for a book that will examine Cesar Chavez's leadership of the farmworker movement. Unlike previous works on Chavez, the information for this book is drawn almost exclusively from primary materials available at the UFW archives." LeRoy stated that this letter of introduction is what planted the seeds for the Documentation Project in his subconscious. Much of the first part of what LeRoy wrote in his essay is a response to specific written questions submitted to him by this professor. He also includes the text of a letter that he wrote to the professor in April, 2003 letting him know about the doc project and all of our participation so that what we've written can also be considered as source material. As far as I know, the full set of essays has only been distributed to the people who actually wrote essays for the project. This listserv seems geared to getting further participation from UFW volunteers who, for whatever reason, did not write an essay... So perhaps LeRoy has more up to date info on what is happening with the prof's book?

Have a good weekend, everybody.

Terry (Vasquez) Scott
1973-1988

P.S. When I was on the boycott in Detroit in '79, I had a chance to visit and tour the archives at Wayne State University. There really was a lot of boxed up stuff there, although at the time, I don't think it was too well catalogued yet. Last year, I was asked to write a biography of Cesar (for 5th grade students). It came out on the 10th anniversary of Cesar's death and is available to teachers and school districts via the internet (Readinga-z.com). In the course of getting the bio ready, the publisher did contact Wayne State about using some of their photos, and in seeing some of this correspondence, it seemed to me that someone (from Wayne State I assume?) has been doing some further organizing/ cataloguing/ sorting because they were able to find some old photos from the CSO days as well as the very early days of the union.. The UAW also has their archives at Wayne State and it was great to see some of the old photos/ memorabilia from the auto strikes in the 1930's.

Susan Drake, 5/14/04

RE: Keeping it in the family?

Paul Henggler's book should appear in September; I've asked him to let me know and I'll put out the word. He began researching at Wayne State, found some self-incriminating stuff that Cesar sent off to the archives and wanted to know how various ones of us thought Cesar's direction had shifted from his original goals. I spent a lot of time with him, and if I've misjudged his character, his sincerity in not wanting to smear Cesar, then I'll feel like a fool...an angry fool.

Susan

Kathie Olguin Smoot and Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/14/04

RE: FW: UFW Documentation Project - Fred Ross and Proposition 14

hi angie, thanks for writing me, your discussion topics are excellent, and we (Kathie "O" and Kathy "M") think that exploring these topics is crucial to understanding how to keep the movement alive... the idea of struggling for justice can easily be lost if the younger generation feels "abandoned" for it, we could easily include the kids when young, but the challenges of raising teenagers is more complicated...we have much to learn...oh, you might be confused because this is Kathie "Olguin" Smoot writing to you on Kathy Murguia's machine! This new-fangled internet thing has brought two dear old friends back together after 30 years...

....Hi, this is Kathy M. with a ditto of what Kathie O. has said. I raised my family of five bio and three that came to the marriage. My essay talks a lot about the difficult choices that I made. We tried to help each other out in all of the child raising and birthing events. Mandy Cohen was so, so

important to me during the birth of my first son Ricardo. Then there was the experience of the Co-op day care, (Barbara Cook, Teresa Bonpane, Kathie Olgujn, Sue Percy, Ann Washburn and then later on a more organized approach - Val and Russ Washburn, Sister Francine, Sister Jean and of course Gordon. I organized the Day Care for the First Constitutional Convention and felt I was in the perfect place to be. It took the union community to take care of the kids who were really our most precious gift to the future. Dolores had from the beginning the support and help with her kids to go on and do the Union's business. There was Fidel being care for by Bill Esher, Petra and "Fish" caring for Angela (Peanuts), LeRoy and Bonnie caring for Alicia, and Cesar and Helen taking care for Emilio. Que Viva Los Ninos y Ninas Kathie O and Kathy M. Si Se Puede.

Andrea O'Malley Munoz, 5/15/04

RE: Hengler's Book

We were contacted by Hengler as well. He said that he picked up comments from Board meetings that Cesar had said he felt some changes in the direction of the union began at the time due to the manner in which Marcos and I left the union and Prof. Hengler wanted Marcos to talk with him "to set the record straight" for the sake of "history."

Marcos felt that it is too easy to miss the accomplishments of Cesar and the union if the focus becomes the tensions and did not speak with him. His impression was why trust a stranger who may have another motive with something so essential and important in your life.

Marcos has always believed the greatest gift of the union and accomplishment of Cesar was to lift the hopes of the farm workers themselves and to help farm workers overcome the greatest poverty of all -- not knowing who you really are or what you are capable of doing when you join together with others, as imperfect as we all may be.

Andrea O'Malley Munoz (Boston, New Jersey – New York, Chicago (1968-1975)

Susan Drake, 5/15/04

RE: Fa Questions on children of La Causa

Not sure, LeRoy, if you feel this topic should be part of this listserv, but I do. First, we know that some of the farmworker leaders' children still serve in social justice if not farmworkers' movement: Cesar & Helen's kids, Dolores' Emilio, Jessie de la Cruz' Roberto (SEIU). Probably others.

I am disappointed that some (many?) parents' commitment to La Causa caused some of our children to seek the security and stability of a more material, middle-class life than a commitment to social justice. I notice the older Matt and Tom become, the more political their conversations are, but they don't incorporate political action into their busy lives. From time to time they revisit their years on picket lines (including the head-bashing Teamster day in Lamont and another dawn with a conversation with a grower), the march to Sacramento (they were pulled in a wagon), Matt's refusal to say the Pledge of Allegiance getting him in trouble in Tehachapi School, and the kids' volunteer group (they had to do little chores same as the grownups) at La Paz when they met with Cesar to ask for pay or something--didn't they threaten to strike if he didn't give them something?

How would others feel about asking our offspring to answer Angie's questions in this listserv? Maybe we can learn something to pass on to other organizers. If general disinterest in this subject on this list, we could discuss with my much smaller UFW listserv. Unless LeRoy says otherwise, let's continue here with the Subject line indicating subject!

Susan

Ellen Eggers, 5/15/04

RE: Children

Both of my children were born in Bakersfield, while I worked in the La paz Legal Dept. (1981 and 1986) I have quite a few unusual stories of balancing children and the Union's work. My first trip

involved a flight to Arizona to argue a case before the Arizona labor board. My son Tom was about 10 days old and of course I was breastfeeding him. Unbeknownst to the members of the board, while I argued the case I was nursing him. They thought I was just holding him (which was weird enough, I suppose!). I also remember getting a flat tire on the Grapevine in the heat of August, traveling with Tomas who was about 3 mos old then. Pretty frightening to be out there with just a baby! But we managed... I was on my way to argue a case before the 9th circuit federal appeals court. Then there was the time Tomas and I took an all night 12 hour bus trip to Yuma AZ. He was about 5 mos old. Had to take the bus because of the air controllers' strike. When I arrived at Oakie Chavez's house in the early morning, baby in arms...we were attacked by their guard dog as I entered their yard (they had forgotten to chain him up...) A fine ending to a wonderful trip! I spent so much time in courtrooms around the state with Tomas that by the time I finally took him to a real church (not our La Paz conference room church) when he was 3, he thought he was in a courtroom and yelled out "Where's the judge?" Then there was the Maggio trial in EI Centro that began in 1985. When it began I had one child...when it was over, I had two...that's how long the trial went... nearly two years.

Nancy Hickey Hughes, 5/16/04 (1)

RE: Fred Ross

Hello, Mark! It was our Ohio staff. When we were illegally arrested we became known as the "Fazio 22" as we had been legally picketing a Fazio store. One of our co-workers was Rick Nixon (Richard T. Nixon from Akron, Ohio). At court the next day (during Nixon's impeachment), even the judge laughed when the court clerk read, "State of Ohio vs. Richard Nixon"!

Nancy Hickey Hughes
UFW 1971-1976

Nancy Hickey Hughes, 5/16/04 (2)

RE: Marshall just hit a nerve. . . and here is some of. . .

Thank you for your memories & observations. I worked in Florida & Ohio & on the prop in California, but was never privy to the inner workings of the union. I did hear rumors of "confrontation groups" before my departure & always wondered what really happened.

Nancy Hickey Hughes
UFW 1971-1976

John Gardner, 5/16/04

RE: Fred Ross

Alinsky and Ross were very different organizers, operators, and men.

Alinsky wrote well, lied habitually, and inspired lots of people on peripheral contact. He claimed to have trained three organizers in his life: Fred Ross, Tom Gaudette, and Nicholas von Hoffman. Later he sometimes amended this to include Ed Chambers but then, when he wanted to make Ed feel like shit, he would withdraw him from The List.

Fred never cared. He functioned almost entirely independent of Alinsky, and developed both method and politics very, very different. Alinsky was a brilliant writer, hustler, fund-raiser, and self-promoter, none of which exactly described Fred.

On the other hand, Fred developed specific methods and disciplines that are, arguably, replicable by teaching.

Since the unraveling of the UFW, they aren't taught systematically anywhere.

Yes, the morning meetings were pure Fred Ross.

Carlos LeGerrette, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

A lot of water has gone under the bridge since many of us have seen, or heard, from each other. So, as Yogi Berra so eloquently stated, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." There's 301 of us in this Internet, only a small percentage have joined in.

Here's an easy exercise EVERYONE can participate.

What are you doing these days? No resumes, just a quick few sentences. I'll start it off. (I can't, and never would speak for Linda, so she'll have to submit her own "mini").

For the past two+ years, I've been organizing Cesar Chavez Service Clubs in San Diego's elementary and secondary schools. We are the fastest growing Club in the local school district. Beginning next September, our leadership development Clubs will be in 15 very diverse schools representing approximately 700 Chavistas. Also I recently begun (or is it began?) archiving my movement photos (3000-4000). Today is a beautiful day!

That was easy!

Carlos LeGerrette
('66-'78, SD Boycott, La Paz, San Ysidro)

Susan Drake, 5/16/04 (1)

RE: Everyone Can Do This

I can do that, too, Carlos.

Left La Paz in 1973, returned to my native Palo Alto to raise Matt and Tom near my family, working as the secretary for Co-op Markets. Meanwhile pursued my passions: networking and writing. After the guys left home, I moved to Santa Cruz, opened an editing, word processing, and freelance writing business in my home. Still love networking with my friends, but writing is my first love. My published articles appear in *The Progressive* and *El Andar* (interviews with Dolores Huerta), seniorwomen.com, small local literary magazines, and upcoming anthologies. Talk up farm worker issues often as I can.

Susan Drake (1962-73/ Credit Union; NY, Ohio, NY boycotts; Membership Legal offices occas., Cesar's office nearly 3 years)
Soquel, CA now

Maria Fuentes, 5/16/04

RE: Sac. Bee: Despite laws, toxic nightmares still haunt farm workers

Thank you for reminding us of why we worked and work with the Farm Workers, why we admire, love and respect Cesar Chavez and of the compelling and critical work that remains to address the pain and suffering of so many farm workers and their families. The enemy regrettably is alive and continues to destroy the health and lives of many men, women and children!

Maria Fuentes
1970 LA Boycott

Susan Drake, 5/16/04 (2)

RE: Sac. Bee: Despite laws, toxic nightmares still haunt farm workers

Amen, Maria Fuentes. Living 15 minutes from Watsonville, my heart breaks repeatedly when I see things in the local news, particularly about pesticides. One could detest farm workers, higher wages for them, and their health and housing issues, but you'd think even the most hateful, ignorant human would not want pesticides on his/ her food. Grrr. Thank heavens we have organic produce locally and that the movement is spreading slowly but surely.

Susan Drake

Rob Everts, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Carlos et al –

This was just the low-bar point of entry I needed. Haven't weighed in on the larger topics yet. By the way, I believe we met via Greg Akili on some campaign or other... Awhile after leaving the UFW I rendezvoused back with Fred, Jr. at Neighbor to Neighbor for seven years. After a couple of brief intervening things, I ended up in 1997 where I am now. I work at Equal Exchange, a worker-owned cooperative that pioneered fair trade in the coffee industry many years ago. Ought there trying to build a credible alternative to the prevailing race to the bottom when it comes to international trade.

Adelante.

Rob Everts – 1975-1982

Kathie Olguin Smoot, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Sounds fantastic, Carlos. Way to go, Brother. At present, I live in Sacto, and ride the Amtrak to Oakland, where I work for the Parole & Community Services Division of the CDC. Specifically, I am a Medical Transcriber for Parole Outpatient Clinics, Region II, which is coastal counties from OR to, including, Ventura Co. and some land-locked counties like San Benito and Lake. We have clinicians in parole offices who provide mental health services to parolees who need them. POC programs have been very successful in reducing recidivism among mentally ill offenders over the past 5 or so years. We also have a VERY large, mandated but Unfunded population of sex offenders. Our administrators are working closely w/ der gubernator to get funded, as our programs have been equally successful in reducing re-offense among this population also.

Besides that, I changed my "colors" from red to green in the early 80's, and I am still very radical/progressive. I think where the MLM movement went astray was in not seeing the importance of Hegel from the outset. Understanding, and being able to apply the dialectic is key. That's my 2 bits. KOS 69-74

Nonie Fuller (Lomax) Graddy, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Nonie Graddy (Lomax) 1970-1975 full and part-time, Salinas and San Luis Field offices and La Paz

What an opening, thank you Rob. I am currently a volunteer at the Monterey Bay Aquarium. I will receive my 15 year pin this year. The mission of the MBA is to inspire conservation of the world's oceans. We talk with people all over the world, not just about the exhibits but about conservation of both land and sea. This June I will be one of the mentors for the student guide class, 50 high school students who will be student volunteer guides at the aquarium, what a joy they are.

Please check out the web site and down load the seafood watch card. * * * *

We can all do a lot of small things that add up. Buy only coffee that has the Fair Trade Certified logo and organic produce. By preference I buy organic produce in Albertson's on the theory that we need to main stream organic produce.

When I first left the Union I worked on the Inter-Harvest lettuce machines for 7 months in Salinas. I then worked for a couple of small farmer (ex-farm workers) strawberry Co-ops in Salinas and then a company that was growing oysters in Moss Landing, as the in house accountant. I will forever be grateful to the Union for the opportunity to learn a trade (bookkeeping) that still supports me. But it is volunteering that feeds my soul.

If any of you are coming to Monterey I have a couple of guest passes to the aquarium and love to give tours.

Stephen Rivers, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

carlos and all,

i left the l.a. boycott in dec. 1977 and went to work for tom hayden's campaign for economic democracy and did a lot of campaign, press and advance work. i managed gray davis' first assembly primary campaign in 1982 and then went back to tom's for the general and was his a.a. in sacramento for a year. then i went to work for jane fonda for 6 years doing press, political, etc. work.

In 1990 I went to work at creative artists agency as the agency's media relations/ public affairs exec, also working with its corporate and talent clients. in 1994 i started my own consulting business and do a mix of entertainment, political, public policy and international work.

I still live in l.a. but travel a lot, mostly to nyc and dc, also havana an amman, and back to mass.

stephen rivers

western mass./ conn. boycott 12/73 – 10/75

la paz (boycott office, nfwsc and mlk) 10/75 – 11/76

s.f. (prop 14, n. cal scheduling & advance) fall 1976

l.a. boycott, 3/77 – 12/77

Mark Pitt, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

I left the UFW in Sept. of 1977 and went to work for ACTWU/ UNITE. I worked on the J.P. Stevens organizing campaign in South Carolina until 1980 when Madeline and I moved to Knoxville, TN. From 1980-2001 I held various positions with the union and "retired" as a Vice-President in June of 2001.

I now work in the organizing department of the United Steelworkers, where I attempt to coordinate various organizing efforts. At this time I am in South Carolina again, working on a campaign involving a Swedish based auto supply company at which we are receiving a significant amount of support from the Swedish Metal Workers Union.

Mark Pitt – 1972-1977. Washington DC, Belle Glade, FL, Cleveland/ Columbus, OH, Chicago, LA, Santa Maria, Delano, Coachella

Dan Spelce, 5/16/04

RE: Implementing vision drew me

Estimadas compañeras, estimados compañeros,

Attending high school in a small, working-class town in northern Contra Costa County from 1967-71, I made friends with the son of migrant workers who had eventually settled. Though the father worked as a union carpenter and the mother a full-time homemaker, I admired that the entire family, including three sons and the daughter, went to the San Joaquin Valley on weekends to picket struck fields with farm laborers. Daniel talked often about the union, gladly displaying the Aztec eagle and other UFW symbols on binders and book covers. Before our senior year ended we organized a peace march for high school students in our county, which baptized me into nonviolent organizing. A year later Daniel and I were thinning lettuce using the short-handled hoe, living in the Camp Toro labor camp of the world's largest lettuce grower, Interharvest (signatory to the UFW's largest lettuce contract), in Salinas.

During those early years of the 1970s I gradually learned about Cesar's vision of a community-union that would contribute significantly to the larger transformation of society. Housing, farmland, health clinics--even gas stations--would all be organized democratically, along cooperative principles. Migrant families would settle, becoming the city councilors and judges, seeding participatory politics, economics and culture throughout California. Once establishing a deep root in California, the UFW would similarly organize farm workers in Arizona, Texas, Florida and both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. This vision heartened and inspired me.

On Labor Day, 1975, I began a fourteen-month period, most of which found me serving on the UFW boycott staff. First stationed in San Jose, I enjoyed brief assignments to help with representation elections around Coachella and Salinas, the Proposition 14 signature campaign in Sacramento, the Brown for President primary campaign in Portland, Oregon, the Hayden for Senate campaign, and, finally, the Proposition 14 general election campaign in San Mateo-San Francisco. After the Hayden campaign, in early June 1976, I went to Salinas for nearly three months on a leave of absence. After so much time sitting in a car driving or sitting in living rooms or sitting in meetings, I wanted to do some physical labor and make a little bit of money. Most of the summer I harvested lettuce with Interharvest on a lettuce harvesting machine crew. I also picked strawberries for a couple weeks. Every so often, Interharvest would lay us off because of a little early morning rain or market conditions. On one such day, I went to Gonzalez to pick tomatoes with a family I met while picking strawberries. A biplane sprayed us with a pesticide on neighboring fields about mid-morning. Before long, many of us felt our skin begin to burn or sting, and see rashes appear on one another. After work, I went to the UFW health clinic in Salinas for an examination. The pesticide poisoning incident was documented.

Working on the machine crew at Interharvest opened my eyes to how confident, well-organized workers exercise their knowledge and strength. One day, we went to the fields without adequate water. Our crew steward promptly went to the foreman to discuss how soon the water would arrive. It was delivered a half-hour later. On another occasion, we were noticing how fast the machine pace was causing us to work. Again, the crew steward approached the foreman. After a short conversation, the speed of the big machine, spanning ten rows, slowed to a comfortable stride.

On a day later in the summer, word arrived to the crew that the Union had decided to close the health clinics. Workers were very unhappy. During break and again at lunch, ideas for challenging and reversing the decision were argued. Dismay and disbelief gripped the crew. The mystery shrouding the clinic closures never dissipated, and workers' sense of self-assurance seemed compromised from that point.

What did happen to the broader UFW vision? Was it formally discharged at some point? If so, what were the deciding factors? Was the Union or Cesar simply becoming ever more practical? Did the purges send off the visionaries? Did Cesar continue talking about cooperatives? Were the clinics ever to be revived? Were the clinic closures the consequence of lost contracts and dwindling membership? How much union resource did Proposition 14 and campaigns for Democratic office seekers absorb? Do insiders and decision-makers of those times think the expenditures of energy and material resources generated a net benefit to farm workers? To the Union? Obviously, farm workers live far better now than in 1960 (certainly in California).

That day, when my Interharvest crew learned that the Union health clinics were to be closed, the air began seep out of the balloon of my hopes for the UFW as a leading transformative social force. Still, I feel a simple reverence for Cesar and the UFW. During the Proposition 14 election campaign, I was Cesar's guide for a morning as he made rounds in San Francisco. Cesar's brother, Richard, drove, with Cesar sat at his side as passenger; I sat way in the back of the station wagon, advising which lane to drive down, and when to turn right or left. Listening to Cesar talk with Richard about the campaign, I came to appreciate how a common worker stepped forward to embrace responsibilities and decide and act in the face of his fundamental humanness. Sure, he suffered flaws and limitations, but he dedicated his genius and vitality to serving the interests of others, as best he could. Really, we all did that for each other, as best we could. We brought out the best in one another: farm workers bringing out the best in city folk; Cesar in us, us in Cesar; urban boycotters empowering agricultural workers. That was the heart of the Union.

Dan Spelce
Santa Cruz, CA

Karen Boutilier Kendall, 5/16/04

RE: Huelgistas

My commentary is in response to the comments by Angie -

My childhood was defined by our involvement with the UFW and I still describe myself as a Huelgista. My folks (Rev. Gene & Luana Boutilier) involvement with the Migrant Ministry began in 1965 and they joined the UFW and worked on a full time basis from 1966-1972. Dad has continued his involvement since '72.

I was six when Dad joined the UFW full time and we moved to Delano. We lived in "strike houses" communally most of our time with the Union. Cesar and Dolores were key role models for me growing up and both had huge influences on my life. The three greatest men I admire to this day are Cesar, Gandhi and Dr. King. Growing up a Huelgista meant eating at the Strike Kitchen at Filipino Hall; terrified at watching Dad and others beat up by the cops on a picket line outside Delano while a group of us sat in a van nearby; visiting Mom and Dad in jail more than once when they were arrested picketing at the White House and outside a produce market; debating with Mom and Dad the pros and cons of taking me (age 9) to a picket where we were guaranteed I too would be arrested; spending Saturdays and Sundays going to demonstrations, marches and rallies; being kicked out of Brownies in Maryland because the other Brownie families didn't trust "those people" who lived in the strike house with the Farmworker flag flying out front and who were constantly in the paper because they were getting arrested. But, we also had wonderful, magical times listening to Cesar talk, watching Teatro Campesino, meeting intensely committed people, singing at rallies, great camaraderie, a strong sense of purpose, excellent office skills (stuffing envelopes, making copies) and learning about the importance of having meaning in your life and giving back to your community.

I wrote a book about my childhood which includes our time with the UFW, our other political involvement including my working for McGovern in '72 at the age of 11 and my trip to Communist China (while it was still unrecognized by the US) with Shirley MacLaine in '73 when I was 12 to make a documentary on the role of women in China. The book will be published later this year.

I had an extraordinary childhood, which today in my forties, I treasure. But, many times during my childhood I wondered if the sacrifice and loss of innocence was worth it. At those times when I felt sorry for myself - I would think about the children who worked in the fields and how their life was getting better because of the UFW. I have great memories of hanging out with the other Huelgistas - Cesar's kids, Delores' kids, Tommy and Matt Drake, the Hartmire kids and many, many others.

I think the story of the farmworkers union is not complete without looking at the impact and affect on the many children of the union and the children of the fields. In exchange for giving up soccer and playgrounds, we worried about adult issues and learned adult lessons. We gave up a "normal" childhood which allowed the fulfillment of our parents' passion and their commitment to an extremely important cause.

Karen Boutilier Kendall, (65-72, Delano, Oakland, Porterville, Washington DC, Tacoma Park MD, Racine WI)

Bob Aderhold, 5/16/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Thanks for the invitation Carlos! Warm regards to all of you! This is Bob Aderhold. I've been sitting on the sidelines savoring the reminiscing and thoughtful perspectives, especially my former colleagues, acquaintances and friends. We overlapped a bit Carlos - I was one of the La Paz mechanics. I worked initially with Ken Hlavic and Wendy Simon, Marc Coleman, and later Elizer Vasquez and others. I joined the NJ boycott in '73, came out to Salinas in '75 to help with post-election clean up - tracking down witnesses to testify at unfair labor practice hearings. Just so happened that I also knew something about cars in addition to the Spanish that brought in from the boycott at the time. When I got a personal call from Cesar one day asking if I would join the La Paz mechanic crew, how could I, a tender 22 year old, say no? I left the union in about September of '78. Post union, I moved back to NJ, worked as a truck mechanic for about 2 years, went back to school, got an undergrad and grad degree in Economics, worked for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York doing financial markets research and bank supervision, married a Minnesotan,

moved to Minneapolis, and now work for Wells Fargo in an investment business, managing a small group of people responsible for compliance with securities laws and regulations. My wife Audrey and I have two boys, 9 and 13. I've been fairly involved in politics since coming to MN 9 years ago, mainly by advocating at the state and local government level around homelessness/affordable housing/ transit/ land use issues but also in the Democratic Party (which they call the Democratic Farmer Labor Party here in MN).

Doug Adair, 5/17/04

RE: WORDS FROM THE MODERATOR

In a message dated 5/11/04 . . . [Angie Fa] writes:

On to the role of the worker priest, I think I disagree with the statement that "without the creation of the worker-priest program... there would have been no strike in 1965". As I remember Fred's House Meeting outline began "First there were the Filipinos.....

Dear Andy Imutan, dear brothers and sisters,

Dear Andy,

I read your essay you sent to Leroy, but never could get your other stuff downloaded into a format I could read, very frustrating, but aside from e-mail, I don't really know much about how to work these computers, rarely go on line. Any chance you can send me your work as an e-mail?

I really liked your essay, almost a minute by minute account of the buildup to the strike. And most of the names you mentioned, I knew well. Felix (Felicin) Ytom worked at Freedman for many years, and gave eloquent speeches at many meetings (but we also had trouble translating him, because he had a tendency to switch back and forth from language to language!). I think this is so valuable, to get this written down. And I think Leroy's project has set off a wave of memories and analysis on which to build.

Rudy Reyes became my best friend in the Union in the early years, and over the years, taught me so much, not the least of which was to view how the union was serving the members by analyzing how the union was serving its minorities. So it is so important for you to get your views and memories preserved. The point of my earlier letter to the group was to note that strike fever was spreading up and down the valley in 1965, and that the BIG STRIKE would have happened, eventually, regardless, because the workers were ready to do something. (And the Migrant Ministry folks and worker priests, or whatever, though very worthy people, had almost nothing to do with it!). But clearly, the NFWA was not ready, and if the AWOC had not taken the lead, the strike would not have been in the grapes in Delano that September. I moved to Delano on Sept. 9, so I heard all the discussion about what the NFWA should do, could do, how to respond. Everyone (Gil Padilla, Cesar and Helen Chavez, Dolores Huerta were the inner circle) had tremendous respect for Larry Itliong, but no one trusted AI Green, Larry's boss up in Stockton. There was nervousness that Green would dump the strike when it got too expensive (which is what he tried to do that winter), or that he would make a deal with the growers to save the camps. And of course the NFWA had no money (\$85 in the bank, is the figure I remember), and no clear idea of what we were getting in to. But the workers themselves began wildcatting, and coming in to the union office, and we quickly reached the conclusion that this was the big chance, and that the Mexicano workers had to stand in solidarity with the Filipino workers, or the chance for joint action would be lost forever.

The question then became, How? We wanted to maintain our independence of action, and did not want to submit to the leadership of AI Green and George Meany, head of the AFL-CIO at the time, who had reputations for being Red-baiting, racist bureaucrats. Many people, good and bad, left the joint struggle in 1966, when the merger finally took place. People left AWOC in horror at the thought of a union led by Cesar and Dolores and Gilbert; and people left the NFWA in horror at the thought of being under George Meany's thumb. I personally felt that the UFW that emerged from the merger (and thanks to a lot of gentle wisdom from Bill Kircher), retained a lot of the best from both original movements, helped make the locally-based, family-oriented NFWA more

sympathetic to the interests of camps and migrant crews and Filipino (and Arab) workers who were a key part of the farm worker community.

Going through old union stuff, I came across a great interview with George Catalan in *La Causa, The California Grape Strike*, by Paul Fusco and George Horwitz, (Macmillan, 1970). Don't know if you're familiar with it.

Anyway, I would love to read what else you have written, are writing, but this computer so far won't download what you send, sorry...

Mabuhay and Causa, Doug Adair, "Malcriado," "Pato," Thermal, Ca

(P.S., I'll send some of this on to the group

Danny Ybarra, 5/17/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Carlos,

It's good to read the responses that this email has generated.

I live in San Diego with my wife, Carla, and four of my six children. My oldest, Danny Jr., is a senior at UC Berkeley. and Sammy is in Bakersfield in his first year at Bakersfield Junior College. In all, I have four sons and two beautiful daughters. My ten year old son is Autistic and is quite a handful (payback). But, he is extremely funny at times with things that he picks up from movies, TV, at school, etc. (one his favorite lines "Is it hot in here, or am I fat?"). I am employed as an attorney with the San Diego Public Defender Office. I am assigned to the Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court which is a special program designed to work with teenagers on drugs. As a result of my work with this population, I have established a nonprofit corporation created with the idea of filling in parenting gaps. For example, my parents always tried to expose me and my brothers to a wide variety of experiences including camping, travel, athletics and other fun and educational activities. I try to do the same with my children whenever possible. But, the kids that I work with have rarely been treated like they are special to anyone else. Instead, they have been molested or abused in many ways, or neglected and abandoned by dysfunctional families. Our program has arranged for local field trips and overnight camping, and we have arranged a wonderful trip to Alaska during the past three summers. Our kids, chosen for having made strides in recovery, or in school and at home, travel to an island southeast of Juneau where they stay with a Native-American community for ten days of camping, kayaking, sweat lodge, and learning about another culture, while associating with kids from another "neighborhood." Every year I sit down and call for contributions from classmates and friends. And every year I eke out enough to get them up and back. My union fundraising skills are being put to use. Within the next two weeks, our corporation will file an application to set up a residential group home for level twelve teenage boys who are difficult to place. Sorry to take up so much space. I get excited when I talk about "my kids."

Danny Ybarra

Gary Brown, 5/17/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Yes its good to see where everyone is. Also, for those of you on the side lines not yet responding. Please do. Some of us are wanting to hear from old friends. In 1974 my wife and I left the Union. I went back to work and school to earn a law degree. I expected to return to work with Jerry Cohen. I ended up organizing my non-union work place and taking longer than expected to complete my education. I became an attorney in 1983. I have been an attorney in the San Diego area since. In 1994 I ran for Congress, not successful. Gary Brown

Rick Longinotti, 5/17/04

RE: Taking responsibility

From: Rick Longinotti, 74-76 Palo Alto, San Francisco, Delano

Friends,

One of the intriguing questions for me is how and why many of us responded passively to the negative things that went on (the Game, the purges). I'm sensing that many of us feel remorse on account of not actively speaking our truth at key times. For example, Marshall Ganz writes, *"But by early spring of 1976 he [Cesar] had begun to conceive of the Nick Jones conspiracy, targeting Joe Smith of the El Malcriado, first - a witch hunt to which we all shamefully acceded."* Thanks, Marshall, for your honest expression. In this letter I would like to offer an alternative way to think about our remorse that doesn't involve shame.

In my current work as a counselor at the county jail in Watsonville, I aim to encourage inmates to take responsibility for their actions. So, I try to encourage the inmates to move beyond their shame. For we are quick to deny the possibility that we are "wrong," "bad," "shameful." Faced with the pain of thinking that we are defective, we'll do most anything to defend ourselves. So the belief that we are shameful will prevent us from really looking at the consequences of what we did. The way I've learned to approach the inmates is to empathize with the need that they were trying to fulfill when they did what they did.

I noticed Mary Mocine empathizing with her own motivations for not speaking her truth, *"I wanted so much to be part of something I loved and work with and for people I loved and that I was so afraid of losing that that I became afraid to speak my mind. In some odd way, the Game was liberating. I found I had survived it and felt that some of my 'liberal, legal dept' guilt was washed away. But I wish I had refused to play because I didn't think it was really useful."* Thank you, Mary. I also felt exhilarated to be working for La Causa - a feeling like I had never had before. I didn't want to lose that feeling either.

Marc Coleman also expresses something I can empathize with although I now have a different perspective. He writes, *"Although I was present at the meeting, it has never occurred to me to apologize for not speaking up at the time. It would have made no difference. I have no doubt I would have been fired on the spot - mechanic or not. And, rightly or wrongly I felt it was not my place to try to lead the union. I always knew that I would sometime move on. I was not a farmworker. I was a guest in someone else's home. I served at the pleasure of the UFW leadership and I had been quickly disabused of any idea that I should have some kind of say in running things. That, for me anyway, was fine."* (By the way, thanks Marc, for your mechanical services. When you and Ken (another mechanic) arrived at our boycott house, it was cause for celebration.)

I too felt a respect for the autonomy of the farmworkers and their leadership. I was aware that Anglos with their sense of empowerment could, without intending to, make it more difficult for people less familiar with the language and culture to assume their own power. The good intentions of us Anglos wanting to respect farmworker autonomy sometimes had funny - and not so funny - consequences (see my essay). Nearly thirty years later I am able to see that considering my own needs with respect - as well as the needs of the union - might have resulted in a solution that would have served both needs. Instead I thought it was my duty to "give up" my own needs. "Sacrifice" had been a big image in my religious upbringing. (I don't mean to say here that there are not times when I defer or relinquish some needs in order to satisfy my need to contribute to others - have done a lot of that in parenting. The difference is that I try not to put down my own needs, think that I shouldn't have them, or that other people's needs trump mine. Satisfying my need to contribute is a joy, and not a sacrifice in the way I used to consider the term).

I also empathize with Marc Coleman's statement that it has not occurred to him to apologize for not speaking up at the time. If by apology, we mean taking on the onus of being wrong, shameful, etc., then please, no apologies. The kind of apology I would like to make is the expression of sadness that in not speaking out, we not only did not meet our own personal needs for integrity, but the movement itself was diminished by purges and authoritarianism. This is the kind of tragic outcome of good intentions that happens all the time. A better way to "help" farmworkers would have been to empower ourselves-to speak our own needs. How else can we encourage self-determination than practicing it ourselves?

Best wishes to all!

Rick

Deborah Vollmer, 5/17/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Folks,

I was going to wait and respond to this a little later; right now I am grieving the loss of my father, who passed away at age 98 last Wednesday night. (One is never ready for these things, and I had hoped for him to survive to his 100th.)

Gary's reference to the legal department, and to his later adventure running for Congress prompts me to write now. There's a parallel to our lives, although I am not sure I ever met you, Gary, when I worked for the Union. I came out to California right after Law School (University of Maryland in Baltimore), worked in the legal department, and stayed on as a Union lawyer after I passed the California Bar. I've already mentioned some of my experiences, positive and negative, in a previous lengthy message that I won't repeat here.

After I left the U.F.W., I remained with the love of my life, Philip Vera Cruz, and we at one point left Delano and I bought us a house in Bakersfield. Philip didn't want to be too far from old friends at Agbayani Village, but the opportunities for me as a lawyer were a little more promising in Bakersfield than in Delano. So we made that move, about 40 miles away from 40 Acres. Anyway, I went on to work for Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, and after that I had a sole practice in which I handled a variety of matters, but ended up focusing on doing court-appointed criminal defense at both the trial and appellate levels. I also ran for Congress in 1992, 1994 and 1996; in the first and last of these races, I won the Democratic primary and went on to challenge (unsuccessfully) Bill Thomas, who is now the Republican Chair of the Ways and Means Committee. Through all of this, Philip and I stayed together in Bakersfield, until he passed away in 1994.

In 1997, I moved back to my childhood home in Chevy Chase, Maryland, to live with my father, who at that point no longer wanted to live by himself (my mother had died years before). For several years, my father and I enjoyed each other's company, and I became involved in a number of volunteer organizations including Gray Panthers, Greater Washington Americans for Democratic Action, Coalition for Universal Health Care, Montgomery County Coalition for Alternatives to War, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church Social Justice Council, and several Democratic Party clubs, to name just a few. I have been focusing my organizing efforts on issues more than candidates – lately mostly anti-war activity, but also pushing for universal, single-payer health care. I have also been working for repeal of the U.S.A. PATRIOT Act, and to add paper trails to electronic voting (We have those infamous Diebold machines here in Maryland).

Since moving back to Maryland, I have also run four times here in the Democratic primary for Congress – in 1998, 2000, 2002 and 2004 – all low-budget, issue-oriented campaigns in Maryland's 8th Congressional District. This last time I also ran, also unsuccessfully, as delegate to the Democratic National Convention supporting Dennis Kucinich. * * * *

Writing this calls to mind a delicate subject, that at some point I would like to see discussed. When I was with the Union, Philip and I were victims of the red-baiting that went on. I think that some folks thought that I was using Philip for some obscure and very leftist group; at least that is the feedback that I remember getting. To the contrary; Philip very much had a mind of his own, and although we were very much kindred spirits, I could never force him to say or do anything that he did not himself feel from the heart. Politically, he was somewhat to the left of me, but certainly not way out crazy. And I think his background as a migrant worker certainly explains his leftward leanings. As for me, brought up in a comfortable middle class professional home, but also taught to have an open mind and to care about people and to work for social justice - well, I suppose politically I was just a little to the right of Philip in my political views-and well within the left wing of the Democratic Party - I never even voted for Nader, although I agreed with a lot of his positions on issues! But where did the red-baiting in the Union come from - that is what I

would like to discuss, if we can keep it civil. I find it ironic that I was perceived by some to be using Philip for some kind of left-wing agenda - when he very much had a mind of his own, and when if anything, my politics were just a tad to the right of his.

Peace,

Deborah Vollmer

Dave Koehler, 5/17/04

RE: Fred Ross influence

David Koehler (1972 -1978) NFWM & UFW

I have been following the discussion with great interest since the list began. It's nice to hear from folks that I haven't seen in quite some time, and to hear the stories that everyone has been telling. Fred Ross comes up a lot, and for good reason. I want to share with you a story that ran this past Sunday in the Chicago Tribune (5/16/04). It was written by Jill Zuckman, Washington Bureau and headlined (on page 9) "Kerry borrows page from former rival's playbook." In the 11th paragraph, under the heading "Idea taken to new heights," the quote reads:

While house parties have been a staple of New Hampshire primary campaigns for years, the Dean effort took it to a national level not seen before. Marshall Ganz, a Harvard University sociologist who once worked with the United Farm Workers; drafted the Dean campaign's plan of action based on methods used to organize farmworkers in California 25 years ago.

Those methods included testimonials from people about why they were motivated to help Dean in his presidential bid. In one evening, the campaign logged 3,300 house parties meeting simultaneously.

With traditional house parties, a candidate visits someone's home, meets the attendees and answers their questions about his campaign. Under the Dean model, people gathered their friends and neighbor without the candidate being present.

Way to go Marshall. As I read this I thought, how many of us have or continue to use the Fred Ross house meeting model we were taught years ago? I certainly have.

In 1977, I was sent to New York City to be the boycott director and to work with Fred to train a new staff of around thirty to organize a house meeting campaign in primarily Brooklyn. Little did I realize the lasting value of that experience.

Lester Silverman, 5/17/04

RE: Taking responsibility

While not a participant in the game, it appears that the results were rigged and that regardless of who said what the game would go on and the results the same. One could not know it at the time but in retrospect, speak up or not the game would have gone on b/c that's what Cesar wanted.

The problem w/ movements like the Farmworkers is that while the need for a charismatic leader is important you can't place all your trust in him. You can't start believing your own press. While Cesar was a great man he had all the fallacies of any other. While I would not say in this circumstance that absolute power corrupts absolutely, It does have an impact.

The only real thing to understand is that 30 years have elapsed, the UFW is still in existence, and how do we continue to struggle to support the ideas that initially brought us together, the idea that the people who harvest the food we eat don't have enough to eat themselves.

Lester Silverman

Roberto Bustos, 5/17/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Deborah, so sorry for your loss! You're in our prayers. Roberto Bustos 65-73

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/17/04 (1)

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Kathy Murguia (1965-1983)

Great to hear on what's going on with all of you. After having been with the Union for 18 yrs. when I left, it was hard. We moved to Tehachapi, but Lupe continued to work with the Union. Yet what I learned in the Union carried on in my work. I returned to school at Cal State Bakersfield to begin a master's program in the social sciences with a focus on counseling. Don't know if anyone remembers Dr. Tulin from Tehachapi, but he was helpful to me in finding work at the Tehachapi Hospital. I worked in marketing and soon organized a campaign to "Save the Tehachapi Hospital." Rural hospitals were taking a big hit financially and using house meetings to spread the word, making buttons and writing a column called Hospital Happenings in the local Tehachapi News, resulted in a great victory. (84% approval) I had established an "in" with the locals. I stayed on at the Hospital, but also while going to school, worked with Supervisor Ben Austin as a local representative, then later as the Executive Director of the Kern Wind Energy Association. Lots of public relations in that role.

Finally I graduated with my Masters and went to work in the Kern County Mental Health in their Forensics Department. Started a private practice in Tehachapi and later became the clinical Director of Tehachapi Community Counseling Center. During this time my kids were going to the local schools and establishing their own paths. Ricardo, Mundo, Benito and Sal played football and had some real glory years as small towns don't have much else going on on Friday nights. Maria was a cheerleader and was outstanding in volleyball. Time passed and they went away to college and got their degrees and some continued into masters programs. Ricardo is a psychiatric social worker with UCSF. YES if some of you can believe it!!! He did turn out great. I could toot their horns but want to ask Leroy if they can tell their stories. Delores, Ana and Joaquin have also established their own paths.

I have become established as a Forensic Mental Health Specialist and have worked with contracted agencies of the State Department of Mental Health for the last ten years. I see patients in the State Hospital and provide court testimony/ reports as to their outpatient readiness along with hospital staff. I have a small caseload and think my work is great. Right now I am in San Jose due to the lucrative offer I received to work with the South Bay Conditional Release Program. I live with my sister and visit Lupe when I can. I plan to retire next year and spend more time with my kids' families, and return to private practice in Tehachapi. I've entertained the idea of helping out at La Paz. Lupe still works there. I would like to say, yes there was a great deal going on, but we made it, and there is much to be done. Speaking for myself, at 64 yrs., it's been a great time. Hear a lot of talk about responsibility, empathy, being ourselves. good stuff
Kathy

Debbie... I admire your commitment to the struggle. You have gone on and did some very admirable work. I'm sorry to hear of the loss of your Dad. Regards

Barbara Cook, 5/17/04

RE: Fa Questions on children of La Causa

Well, the subject of how "La Causa" affected our children has propelled me to respond. Richard and I were rearing two children during our most active years - 1971 -1975 - Matt and Sarah. I'm sure that there are former volunteers who remember Matt's biting and Sarah's propensity to climb into toilets at La Paz. But what troopers they were - my most precious memory was rolling them around in a borrowed double stroller in the heat of the Arizona summer. I was going "door to door" collecting recall petition signatures to recall the governor, "one-eyed" Jack Williams. After I got a door slammed in my face by a suburban housewife, Matt (4 years old) asked incredulously, "Why don't they want to help farmworkers?" Maybe my message wasn't that clear. He should have done the talking. The movement informed their upbringing and has provided a solid foundation for the good work they do as adults - Matt is a community organizer in Quepos, Costa Rica - married to a "Tica" with two bilingual children; Sarah is a teacher and will be relocating this summer to

Mexico City with her Mexican husband who is also a teacher and their two bilingual children. Going to public schools, playing with toys from the Goodwill and having twenty boycott volunteers in St. Louis as parental role models enriched their characters. What a gift "La Causa" gave to them.

My bio – I went to medical school in 1977 and ultimately became a family physician. At the present, I am president of a primary care group practice of 109 physicians at Hopkins in Baltimore and a very happy grandmother.

Barbara Cook, 1971-1984

La Paz, Recall Campaign in Arizona, St. Louis Boycott, Salinas

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/17/04 (2)

RE: WORDS FROM THE MODERATOR

[Doug -] I agree that there would have been a strike without the worker priests. My thought about the worker priests are that it was a grouping within the California Migrant Ministry. Also, the NFWA's posturing re: strike activity in the fall of "65". In the spring of "65", I was working with Citizens for Farm Labor, and had gone to Stockton with Ann Draper to meet with Al Smith and Green. We arrived in the early morning hours for the "shape up". AWOC was working with labor contractors to sign up workers. They were interested in building a membership base and using dues money to finance a organizing effort which often meant to pay their salaries. AWOC organizers went to the "shape up" to talk to workers on that basis. I was too naive to be unimpressed.

The Coachella Strikes of the Filipino brothers in the early summer and its success minus a contract, set the stage for Larry Itliong's move in Delano. The NFWA leadership was caught off balance, but responded, and there was some tension of where resources were going from the Labor caravans. Reuther's support set the tone for an ultimate reconciliation. Bill Kircher was indeed key to facilitating the merger of the NFWA and AWOC. UFWOC for a while. However the economics of a "take off" and the momentum that was generated in so few years was only sustained by the concept of volunteerism. The origin of this idea I am interested in hearing more about. I don't believe that it would have come about, but for Cesar's philosophy and the notion of the worker priests. Also on the boycott, each city was expected to be self sustaining; that is raise at least as much as what your budget was. We were able to raise money because of our own circumstances of being volunteers (unpaid labor).

People respected this and were often in awe of the dedication and how darn hard we worked, and of the successes. It was a new ethic of organizing. Kathy Murguia.

[Uncertain]

RE: FW: UFW Documentation Project – Fred Ross and Proposition 14

I started typing up a synthesis of Fred's organizing theory, which was much more than a method, several times. Eventually my efforts infuriated him, and he broke off the relationship.

But I have a lot of draft somewhere in a box in the attic, as well as my own synthesis that I've used and taught for the last three decades, about 85% of which is, in my view, pure Fred Ross; although much of it he would not, for reasons I think useful to decipher, ever state publicly or take responsibility for in written word.

Maybe we could all become like warring disciplines of The Holy Prophet, and write our alternative Sahnid Islam, and cut one another to ribbons over punctuation and thesaurus, like good monotheists.

Ellen Starbird, 5/17/04

RE: FW: UFW Documentation Project – Fred Ross and Proposition 14

I believe most of the archives of the movement are lodged at SFSU library. fyi. –Ellen Starbird

Sharon Delugach, 5/17/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Hi everyone. Yes, thanks, Carlos, for breaking more ice for more people. I already wrote once, but I'm looking forward to hearing from some of my old pals. As I said before, I quit high school in Los Angeles to work for the boycott in 1974-5, then went to the East Bay for Prop 14. When I left the union, I did a bunch of community and labor organizing campaigns, initially with Paul Milne and Rob Lavis. Worked on Tax Big Oil (thanks to Bill Z.), ballot access for the Citizen's Party, some anti-racial violence stuff and central america stuff. Then I came back to Los Angeles to work at Jobs with Peace, where I stayed for 8 or 9 years as the program director. (I met Larry Frank and John Brown while they were still with the union but got to know them much better through Jobs with Peace.) After Jobs with Peace, I worked briefly with Ron Carey when he was running for Teamster Prez, then became chief of staff for Jackie Goldberg when she got elected to the L.A. City Council. My proudest achievement was helping to write, organize and win the L.A. Living Wage ordinance. now I'm the policy director for LA Councilmember Martin Ludlow, a big (but first-time elected) labor guy. am I turning into a bureaucrat?? I never went (back) to school, but that may change if Marshall Ganz can help me out a bit. I live in the Mount Washington neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Definitely cut my teeth with the union and met folks with whom I've shared my life work for lo these 30 years!

Sharon Delugach

Los Angeles boycott – volunteer 1974, Juan de la Cruz Liberation Brigadista 1975
Oakland 1976-7

Mark Sharwood, 5/18/04

RE: OUT OF BOUNDS?

Kathie - Sorry for the delay in answering. Thanks for picking up on my comment about the "generations". I didn't attach any deep meaning to the term... just those who started around the time of the Proposition 14 campaign, which is later than most of the participants in this online forum (or who contributed essays).

By "silent" I meant that we are mostly not participating in this discussion, a fact LeRoy commented on to me in correspondence about my essay. This includes many [*not all*] of those with whom I worked most closely in the Field and Boycott offices (Scott Washburn, John Brown, field organizers like Lupe Cordova and Hector Perez;, boycott organizers like Guy Costello and Alice Thompson). I had a lot of contact with Arturo Rodriguez during my 6 years, but I recently did a search of the Documentation Project CD and was surprised to see that, as the person now charged with carrying on Cesar's mission [and trying hard, I think], he shows up in very few essays.

I won't presume to speak for those who haven't spoken. The internal divisions, especially conflict with rank-and-file leaders from the vegetable industry around the time of Marshall's departure from the Union, may be part of it.

I guess there must be a "new" generation as well. Maybe those who have started after Cesar's death. In the last few years, I understand that the UFW has been paying salaries to staff, which by definition would exclude them from the scope of LeRoy's original project ("Did you earn \$5 a week?").

Kathie, it sounds like the second part of your message is referring to "The Game." There has already been a lot of discussion on this so far. There was one I participated in that turned into a fairly ugly gay-bashing session (I wrote about this in my essay), but otherwise it seemed to me more tedious than sinister, where people would "grasp at straws" to find complaints about other people so they could show they were participating. In my brief (5 month) stay at La Paz, I did not play "The Game," probably the dynamic was different there.

Mark Sharwood
1976-1978 (Prop 14, Field Offices) – 1979-1982 (La Paz, Boycott)

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/18/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Hi Everyone:

First of all, Debbie, so sorry to hear about the loss of your father.

I left the union in 1988 and moved back to LA to go to grad school. Found it wasn't a good fit and dropped out after a year. I remarried and had 2 more children (which makes a total of 4: three boys and one girl). I started a small home business (tape transcription and word processing services) after the birth of our youngest child. My passion the last 10 years has been focused on creating music – primarily as a singer/ songwriter with some occasional small gigs. I am currently about halfway through recording a CD of my original songs, and also just recently joined a bluegrass band (along with my husband Jim who plays fiddle).

My two older sons have very blurry memories of their time in the union (they were 7 and 5 when we left La Paz). They did, however, live with Elizer in Earlimart during their teenage years, and both graduated from Delano High School. Raul has been living in the Bay Area for the last 5 years. He graduated from St. Mary's College last May and is hoping to become a screenwriter/ go to film school. Chris and his girlfriend Marie live in Porterville. He works full-time doing day care for developmentally disabled adults, and is also taking college courses at night (majoring in psychology). They are raising Marie's 3 year old son from a prior relationship, and together they are awaiting the birth of a baby girl any day now. (Due date is June 4th!)

Just to comment on raising kids in the movement: from my perspective, it was definitely a mixed bag! There were so many wonderful things - a chance to be a part of history and see your parents working for positive change in the world, as well as that sense of being a member of the extended union family... lots of great role models and friendships with other union kids. On the downside, there wasn't the opportunity to do normal kid stuff like playing soccer on the weekends, etc.; there was a general lack of supervision and attention to their needs - especially for the older kids and teenagers, and as a result, they often grew up too fast. My increasing discomfort with this whole situation, and particularly as a single parent, my unwillingness to have so little time with my kids was a big factor in my decision to leave the union.

It's been wonderful to hear the updates from so many old friends – I hope those of you who haven't responded yet will do so.

Terry (Vasquez) Scott
1973-1988

La Paz, LA Boycott, Seattle Boycott, St. Louis Boycott, Kansas City Boycott, Detroit Boycott

Lester Silverman, 5/18/04

RE: Taking responsibility

I think Scott Washburn has passed away, John Brown is in L.A. but doesn't use a computer. I spoke to him on Friday.

Where are many people who we all remember on the boycott including Susan Sachen, Alice Sunshine, Ken Fujimoto, Mike and Kathy Lacinak, Mike Linfield, who is now a Superior Court Judge in West Covina, George Sheridan, Carol Frances Likens, Fr. Ed Donovan and etc.?

Joel Glick, 5/18/04

RE: Taking responsibility

George Sheridan is president of the Black Oak Mine Teachers Association. He has been a leading activist in the struggle against high-stakes, standardized testing. I've seen him at the annual NEA convention the past few years.

Joel Glick (1970-73)

Cathy Adams (Lacinak), 5/18/04

RE: Taking responsibility

Hi all - I haven't checked in yet because I feel like such a small cog in this wheel, but seeing my name pop up made me decide to say hi. . . .

I have watched the discussion here with interest. It is amazing to me how much emotion can resurface so quickly after 25 years. For all of our differences, we snared at least one very strong belief in social justice for farm workers. We were all there to win rights for farm workers, weren't we? And everyone made significant sacrifices, some more than others, but none the less.... I guess I believe that even with all the problems and faults that the cause and individuals within the movement had, we all gained a lot from knowing Cesar, from being part of the union and the movement, and from knowing each other. No one disliked the Game more than I did, but that is one tiny piece of what it was all about. (I didn't think that at the time, but time gives perspective to everything).

Personally, I vote for healing... but unless people can say what they feel, we can't get there. It is good to hear what all of you are doing. What a dynamic and committed group this still is!! I know that being part of the farm worker movement inspired my sense of social justice and still motivates me to represent the underdog. I am sure it affected us all. Viva! Cathy Adams (Lacinak)

Mark Sharwood, 5/18/04 (1)

RE: Taking responsibility

In a message dated 5/18/04 . . . [Lester Silverman] writes:

I think Scott Washburn has passed away.

NOT TRUE – at least as of last week. He is involved in political campaigns and also has worked for SEIU at different times on health care organizing and similar projects. Where did that rumor come from? He is just not participating in these discussions, which is why I mentioned his name.

Mark Sharwood
1976-1982

Stephen Rivers, 5/18/04

RE: Taking responsibility

I believe that another of the Washburns passed away (Russ?).

Ellen Eggers, 5/18/04

RE: Susan Sachen

Someone, not sure who, was asking about her... I don't know her from my union days, but we later worked together in Sacramento for the Calif State Employees Assn... now I believe she works for SEIU and used to be part of the Justice for Janitors Campaign. She is married to a labor attorney for the Van Bourg law firm in SF. Paul (can't remember his last name, but they helped the UFW legal dept). I have her phone number if someone would like to contact her... she lives in the Oakland hills. Ellen Eggers, la paz legal and LA boycott

Mark Sharwood, 5/18/04 (2)

RE: Susan Sachen

Paul's last name is Supton, the attack-dog genius of the Van Bourg firm, the scourge of bad employers such as our off-and-on (presently ON) nemesis in Justice for Janitors, Somers Building Maintenance. Susan recruited me to my present SEIU job after I had not seen her for 11 years.

Mark Sharwood
1976-1982

Pete Savino, 5/18/04

RE: my 2 cents

Pete Savino (LA boycott, 1975-1977)

I started, at 23, as a staffer during the Gallo Boycott, Jim Drake was the LA Director. I was the Venice Organizer, then the Westside Coordinator, then the Juan de la Cruz Brigade Coordinator, then I worked on Prop. 14. Like most of us, the experience set a course for my life. I was greatly influenced by many of the people I encountered, too many to name all, but some names have come up in this discussion. Terry Carruthers (Scott) was my original (18-19 yr. old) supervisor, and she was impressive. She defied super market security guards who dragged me into the back room and handcuffed me, I don't know what else might have happened if she wasn't there. Several of us, including a 17 yr. old Sharon Delugach, were arrested in Lynwood and strip searched for talking to customers at a picket. There were many other incidents, getting roughed up and arrested was part of the sacrifices we learned to make (& this was just the Boycott). What I learned about organizing carried over to becoming a community organizer, when Alice Sunshine and I left the UFW at the same time to work for rent control passage and other issues with Coalition for Economic Survival. Lester Silverman joined us shortly after. I later worked for unions and community organizations until putting in almost 20 years as a bureaucrat of sorts with the Santa Monica Rent Control Department. I'm president of my union here though, and we're right now negotiating for Cesar Chavez Day as a paid holiday.

I think there are some lessons to remember from negative bits. On the Prop. 14 campaign hundreds of us poured into L.A. We used the Synanon facilities for lunch and showers. It was strange that this cult should help us, but the intention was clear as they had one of their people at each of the lunch tables talking to us. Of course we were too smart to be "organized" by them. Out on the campaign we could sense exactly when the effective grower ads hit, even though we never saw TV. As stated by others, the strategy handed down was to ignore the challenges and keep on script. But I noticed other negative things come out during that time: Fred Ross instructing us to just shout at the top of our lungs all day long to get signatures, getting supporters to let us nail signs to their roves (but afterwards we were not permitted to return to do patching). There was a sense of using people in an expendable way. Then after the campaign, a training session by Fred Ross, or was it the "Anti-Fred Ross," tearing down trainees with harsh criticism. Perhaps what I found most objectionable was hearing him belittle his own accomplishments. What had gotten into him? We didn't know about the "Game" at the time. Then there was the witch-hunt and the Nick Jones letter, I left demoralized. There were always some in the movement for political commitment and others out of moral/religious commitment, that diversity was a great asset. Later I heard about the "Game" from Pat Davis, who was at La Paz.

We may have always had a tendency to be cultish, but it was a natural, unintended tendency because of our dedication and the fact that we found ourselves in our own unique lifestyle. But apparently with influence from a real cult, it turned into an intentional effort to create a cult, complete with mind control. Not that that episode should really be dwelt on, it was just a short time. But it had a big impact and became a turning point for so many of us. Let us never fall into such a trap again.

Kate Colwell, 5/18/04

RE: What have 30 years wrought?

I was so happy to see Kathy M's message I didn't follow directions and ended up responding only to her.... So I wanted to repeat my message so I can say hi to the many friends from UFW days.

So many old names, many faces rising to mind, many outlines of folks I can't completely remember.

The UFW years were the pivotal years of my life and a quarter century later I've spent a lot of time recently meditating on how much the union affected me. Life was not perfect but the union irrevocably formed who I am and some of those wonderful friendships continue today.

I left the Calexico clinic at the end of 1976 because I didn't enjoy clinic administration and wanted to go back to the midwifery I'd loved in Delano. After I finished nursing school 1979 in SF, all the clinics had closed and I headed to Reyes Tijerina land in Northern New Mexico to a tiny clinic where I could do midwifery again. That community clinic had a board that interfered a lot in how we took care of patients and I was just this weekend reflecting on how little of that kind of favoritism went on in the UFW clinics. I still marvel how well things went in the clinics compared to how hard it is to deliver quality health care these days.

I quickly decided that nursing was a mistake and headed back to SF to do pre-med while working as an OB nurse at SF Gen. Hospital (Another place that grew a lot of wonderful people!) I graduated from the UCB/ UCSF program in 1987 and did a family practice residency in Martinez CA. Except for 6 months at a homeless clinic in San Francisco, I have basically worked in Contra Costa County Health Services since then.

I see patients at a county clinic in Richmond and for the past seven years have done quality improvement work for the county clinics and health plan. Despite lots of good people trying hard, life in public sector health care is a horrible struggle these days. Arnold and George aren't making it any easier! I'm currently planning my exit by trying to make contacts with more grass roots community projects that would be closer to my heart and values.

I live in Kensington (East Bay) with my partner of 16 years and we have a rambunctious 11 year old (yes I was 40). Delighted to hear about kids turning out well, not only because I remember them as beautiful newborns and toddlers and little kids, but also because it's so scary sometimes to wonder how you help a child grow up sane and healthy with "good values" in this over hurried over stressful world.

There are of course UFW folks in and out of health care who I run into all over the Bay Area and I will invite friends to join this process. Thanks Carlos for the simple invitation. I know there were lots of hard times but I remember the Union with so much love and appreciation and I'm grateful to hear what you're all up to.

Sorry for your loss Debbie.... I remember you at 40 acres and am glad you've been able to carry on la causa!

Namaste

(Kati)

Kate Colwell 1973-1977

(LA Boycott, Huelga School, Delano, Sanger and Calexico clinics)

Chris Schneider, 5/18/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Hi everyone,

Thanks for inviting folks to do this, Carlos.

It appears that most the people on the list had left the union before I joined, and many that I met while I was there left before I did so I'll fill in from about '82.

In '82 Magdalena Beltran and I married. Magdalena has been a Sun Harvest striker/union member who came to La Paz for the English school.

In '86, after finishing the legal apprenticeship program, I was sworn in as an attorney. (Marcos Camacho was also sworn in. that day. Barbara Macri and Ned Dunphy would follow one year later.)

In 1989 I left the union and began working with CRLA in Delano. (While there I began some advocacy work on behalf of H2-A shepherders who were/ are more exploited than any other farm workers I met during my UFW days and since. I am still involved with that work today. They are excluded from minimum wage and required to be alone at the work site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They have no form of transportation or communication and are dependent upon the employer to deliver provisions and mail and to send money to their families in Peru and Chile. They live in trailers that are about 5' x 10' with no water or heating or cooling. The growers don't provide portable restrooms like all the other growers. Instead they give workers a shovel to bury their excrement. They earned \$600 per month. NFWM sent Lupe Murguia to help interview the workers and document the conditions).

In 1991 I transferred to the CRLA office in Madera. Among other activities there I worked with some community based advocates to develop a Fred Ross style house meeting campaign to push for affordable housing. They built an effective organization and regularly turned out a couple hundred people to city council and board of supervisors hearings there-big crowds for Madera governmental meetings.

In 1993 I came to work for Central California Legal Services (CCLS) where I still work. (In March of 2001 working with some ex-shepherders who formed the Shepherders union, CCLS published a study on shepherd conditions. Having learned the power of publicity from the UFW we sought publicity outside the central valley and had some success with that. CRLA Foundation drafted legislation which won support from the State AFL-CIO, UFW, the California Council of Churches and others and finally won some modest improvements in working conditions for sheep herders and got wages up to \$1,200 per month. There are only about 1,000 herders in California but the wage increase represents about \$5.5 million per year - most of which is being sent back to improve conditions in villages in Peru and Chile that the workers come from and to which they eventually return).

Magdalena and I have four children. Alan, 21, studies computer graphics at Fresno City College and is working on the State Assembly Campaign of Juan Arambula. (Juan comes from a Delano farm worker family and was at Delano High during the first grape strike). Jazmin, 18, graduates from high school in two weeks. Vanessa, 17, who learned to walk at the 40 Acres at Mass during Cesar's last public fast, will be a senior next year. Lucero, 9, will be in 4th grade next year.

Regards to all,

Chris Schneider 1973-1989 Chicago, Prop. 14, Milwaukee, La Paz, Calexico, Salinas, Yuma, etc.

Will Kirkland, 5/19/04

RE: From Will Kirkland

Hey Old Timers

What a rush of mail and memories! . . .

I worked in and out of La Paz most of 1974-76, about three years, after a fullish summer in and around Delano in 73. Those three years were filled with everything from land-ownership research in Fresno to a rolling payroll team with Anna Puharich, Danny Ybarra and others. (My CV expanded by two pages from the work I did then!) I had come out of 4 years of anti-war work with the Institute for the Study of Non Violence, in Palo Alto, and went on to teach at Yale, translate fiction and poetry from Spanish, live in Spain, teach English, write software, troubleshoot computers, and am back into anti Empire building work now, while I make a living from computer work - some union clients among them. Over those years the lessons I learned from Marshall Ganz, Larry Tramutola, Jessica, Gilbert and Esther Padilla, CC of course, and many others, have stayed with me, sometimes as broad planks of a life, sometimes as weird little memories. Lots of despair too that we couldn't grow it bigger, faster; stay together longer, morph into something else, change more lives. Amazement that among all the people I knew then there has been so little back-sliding into the savage right-wingism of others, like David Horowitz, for example. Good work goes forward, though never as fast as we would wish. Thanks everyone for those years.

I still see Jim Hirst, Cress Fraley (father of two), Wendy Batson (mother of 4), Fred Ross Jr. (father of 2); saw Susan Sachen for a while a year or so ago - doing union work, Ellen Starbird, Aggie Rose... others.

As to the whole truth and nothing but the truth questions floating throughout these e-mails. .. I understand wanting to protect what is precious by not talking about what is not. I also know for a fact that these list-serves can soon be incredibly effective rumor mills - as destructive in their speculative, unchecked nature as any back-fence gossips. However, no one is served by deliberate non-knowing, even when the non-knowing preserves something fine. I strongly urge everyone who has stories to tell, secrets buried, links to be made, documents in hand, to collect them, write them, concretize them in some fashion - with conditions for use if necessary (e.g. Not to be used until my death, or, ...) Talk to serious writers - under conditions of anonymity if necessary (aren't we. all glad people talk to Seymour Hersh and Bob Woodward?) Maybe Leroy or someone else would collect stories "not for publication until..." Let the histories be written; let many histories be written! Our children may need them down the road...

All the best. * * * *

Will Kirkland

Emmy Bell Cardiel (Lopez), 5/19/04

RE: My First Memories of the Union

My first memory. I have several memories of the Union. It's a memory that has stayed with me since the age of 5 (1972-1973). My mother, Cynthia Bell, had been working in the fields organizing the farmworkers, and every morning bright and early I would wake up in my Mom's Valiant, in the back seat with a blanket, crying, and crying and it would take several moments before I could calm myself down. My mother was nowhere to be found. I would look out of every window of the car and I wouldn't see her. What I would see is the farmworkers, walking with their lunch igloos and their bandanas, disappearing into the grape vines. And I would remember that my Mom is out there, out there somewhere trying to help these people, and all I knew at the time was that they needed help and that was my Mom's job. So I would sit back and wait, and wait and wait. I do not have a memory of her returning to the car. I do have memories of her leaving me in the car to go and help these people. That had been our life at that time. I think we had been living in Delano, California, at the time. I also remember one time (I was still about 5 yrs old), driving by the grape fields we had been chased by a big black car, later I found out they were the Teamsters!! I remember me in the back seat and Lupita and my mom was driving. A black car had come up fast beside us, I remember big white men because they rolled down their window, and they threw a bottle and it had hit the side window where I had been sitting. Lupita yelled for me to scoot away from the window. I could still feel it!!! How dare these men do that to a 5-year-old little girl! Well I came never to forget it. I too belonged to the Union like my mother. Had been proud too. Growing up in the Union. Poor, most of my clothes from donation boxes that people would bring to the union. I didn't mind. I didn't know any other way. I remember living on Lexington Street in Delano, in a little white house; next to the Principal of the school I used to go to. His name was Mr. Thornton (I think) but he asked my mom for a Huelga flag with Cesar's signature. I was his pet for the rest of school year! I also remember eating freeze dried eggs and beans that my mom would get to feed us. Not bad at all from what I could remember. I don't think I complained! And the blocks of cheese we would get. My mom lived according to her beliefs and she had taught me to do the same. I wouldn't have wanted it any different. For I believe it has molded me into whom I am today. . . .

Emmy Bell Cardiel (Lopez)

1969-1978/ 1981-1989

(Student/ Assistant to Esther Winterrowd, Admin. Secretary to Cesar Chavez/ Print Shop worker/ Front Gate Guard and Telephone Operator in La Paz/ Dog sit for Pete and Delores Velasco (Poodles) and for Chris and Pug Hartmire (I remember "Tonka")/ Data Processing-Direct Marketing Department in La Paz/ Word Processing Department in La Paz/ Service Center Tax Season - (I worked for one tax season!) at the Radio Campesina in Woodlake/ Toured with Cesar

Chavez throughout the east part of the states as his assistant/ Rodrigo Terronez Medical Clinic – Delano.

Barbara Tuttle, 5/20/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Thanks, Carlos, for getting us talking. I'm Barbara Tuttle, who was on UFW staff from 1973-1977. I started with a year on the Denver Boycott, then came to La Paz in May 1974, where I worked in the circulation department of "El Malcriado." After about six months, I moved to Boycott Central in the Admin. Building, where I worked with Kathy Murguia and Jim Lynch, a wonderful pair. (Hi, Kathy! Good to see your postings!)

In the summer of '75, post-ALRA, I got sent out on the election campaign in Delano, Visalia and Yolo County. After we won some elections, I got put in contract negotiations as an assistant, charged with taking fastidious notes in bargaining sessions so that we could nail the growers for bad-faith bargaining, if need be. In that role, I traveled all over the place - Salinas, Oxnard, San Ysidro, and Coachella, among other places.

I left the UFW in January 1977 - mainly because it was just "time" - to move on and do other things. I went to New York City, where I had relatives, planning to stay only a short time while that ended up being six years. In New York, I completed a B.A. (Spanish & French) and then an M.A. in English at NYU. Then wondering what I could do with a grad degree in English and loving research and all things book-related, I got an M.S. in library science at Columbia.

In 1982 I married an old high school friend who taught economics at Ohio State, and moved to Columbus. After a couple of years there, we moved to Eau Claire, Wis., (90 miles east of Minneapolis-St. Paul), where my husband got a teaching job at a UW branch. We've got three great kids: Sarah, 20, is at Stanford majoring in economics, with plans to do developmental economics in third-world countries. Kate, 16, and John, 15, are both in high school.

In 1997 I set foot in California again for the first time since I'd left in 1977. Thanks to the Internet, I've hooked back up with old UFW buddies, and I've been back out there several times.

I feel like this posting of mine sounds like a resume. It's hard to sketch out 25-30 years of your life so briefly! I'd love hearing from any old friends, but I'll warn you – I'll be away till June 6, so it'll be awhile before I answer.

It's great hearing everyone's stories. Thanks, LeRoy –

Barbara Tuttle
UFW 1973-77
Denver Boycott, La Paz

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/21/04

RE: My First Memories of the Union

Emmy, Mija. It is so good to hear from you. I remember I took you to my parents' house in Delano one day after work (40 Acres). (I think you arrived in Delano from Coachella when you were three years old?) You wouldn't go in because the Christmas outdoor lights frightened you. My dad had to coax you inside by turning the lights on and off before you felt secure enough to enter the house. My parents were going to take care of you that day because you mom had to work late. I believe they took care of you on and off for a while. My dad and stepmom loved you so much and me, too. Do you recall that I lived with you for a few months on Lexington? That is not where you lived when you first came to Delano. Your first home reminded me of a tree-house. Ask you mom about it. It was good to hear from your mom. I lost touch with her and didn't know where she was.

I want to say something about your mother. If I was young growing up in the movement, I would be happy having a mom like yours. Yours was the best mother in the world (except when she had to comb your hair! Ouch! She showed no mercy!) She made sure all your needs were

taken care of first. Never would it have occurred to her to buy for herself if she knew it would mean depriving you of something you needed. Those of us who remember you and your mom know she did a fantastic job of rearing you in such unusual circumstances. I am glad to hear about your children and husband. My lunch is almost up. Take care, Emmy, and talk to you soon. /abby flores rivera p.s.

Emmy Bell Cardiel (Lopez), 5/21/04

RE: My First Memories of the Union

Hi Abby--I definitely remember staying with my mother underneath the front desk at the 40 acres. I definitely remember staying there late nites when dark would almost appear. I do remember our tree-house. And you are absolutely right about my mother, she would do without to make sure I had what I needed. I do remember that. And believe me If I had to do it all over again, I would not have changed a thing in my life! My mother was my rock, she is one strong cookie! And I also remember that everywhere I went within the union we were all a family, I felt - THE LOVE - from everyone and that I think is what helped us along as a family. Growing up so young in the union I do not remember a lot of detail (names!!!) from my early-early years. But I bet if I saw your face it would definitely ring a bell!! Since this list, my mom has been talking about a lot of things and has stirred a lot of precious memories. You were part of those memories, thank you for remembering me. And you know what I think I do remember something about Christmas lights in Delano! Yes definitely would like to talk to you some more. Emmy Bell Cardiel (Lopez)

Doug Adair, 5/21/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

In a message dated 5/10/04 . . . [Richard Ybarra] writes:

...."practical ones" like Tom Dalzell were the ones who pushed hardest with Jerry to get themselves paid more than Cesar's standard. I remember arguing with some of them at the time, letting them know that Jose Luna and Pancho Botello are as or more important than any attorney. Those were some standards that needed to be maintained, at least at that time.

Dear all,

I was interested in Richard Ybarra's comment about the Legal Department's lobbying for increased pay and bennies, since I remember it setting off heated debates within the Legal Department itself in 1976.

Carol Schoenbrunn and I were kind of the "un-lawyer" caucus when we had the Legal Office in Salinas. We were working on a manual, English and Spanish, on all the ALRA rules and regulations, to enable the paralegals in the field offices to handle all the paperwork involved in petitioning for elections, and having elections, documenting unfair labor practices, etc., etc., etc.... Our ideal was a field office and membership structure that was not dependent on lawyers, from organizing, through signing contracts. And even in the hearing where it was deemed we needed the lawyers to organize the case, Carol and I were urging that the lawyers use it as a school and training session, with the hope that farm workers could be trained to take it all on. Some of the lawyers were dubious, some more enthusiastic than others, but Jerry gave the project a priority status, and it really was an amazing team, a really sincere desire to serve the people, none of the arrogance and elitism of corporate lawyers.

Jerry held lively staff meetings, and there was a very free expression of views. At one of these meetings, he announced that he was proposing a increase in the per diem or pay for the lawyers, and Carol and I jumped all over him -- how dare he propose that any lawyer was worth more to the union than Roberto Garcia (our example that day -- one of the best, chief organizers in Salinas).

Jerry replied on two levels, arguing that it had nothing to do with "worth." The first was on the basis of need, ("to each according to his needs"?) that a lawyer traveling down to the courthouse in Bakersfield had to play by the rules, and appearance was part of it, including a suit and tie, presentable clothes and appearance. Yes, you could get suit coats at Goodwill (Mike Heuman had

one -- I borrowed it once and discovered that the pockets had been sewed up), but there was a cost to the appearances. And yes you could brown bag it for lunch, but was it so unreasonable to be able to buy a modest lunch? When Carol and I went around to the field offices, we just mooched off of the locals, but the folks in the Courthouses were not so generous. (Also, some of the lawyers had significant debts from law school, as I remember).

The other argument that Jerry made was that, as head of the department, it was his job to try to negotiate the best possible conditions and bennies he could for his staff, try to get everything he could to maximize our productivity. It was the job of the head of organizing to get for his staff what they needed to get their jobs done.

I'm not sure Carol and I were convinced, but we respected his arguments.

I would assume that today, many positions in La Paz, in the Foundation, in the Funds, maybe on the regular staff, are mostly salaried.

Was the ideal of volunteers, of an unpaid staff, just a romantic dream, that could not work over the long run? For a single guy like me, who didn't buy cigarettes and didn't care about clothes, \$5 a week was no problem. Extra money from home might treat the Malcriado staff to dinner at the Pagoda or the Basque Cafe in Bakersfield. Folks down from the cities always seemed to treat to the beers at Peoples Cafe (and local vatos locos supplied the home grown). All my needs were taken care of... For families, it was a whole different world.

I never served in La Paz, so I don't know how these issues were debated and resolved up there. Certainly Jerry encouraged open and vigorous debate within his department, and we, lawyers and non-lawyers alike, didn't hesitate to criticize him or disagree with him. In the Delano years, every kind of view and opinion was expressed in People's, a kind of free speech zone. In the early years, it was argued that a paid staff was a symbol of a less dedicated staff, people working for the money instead of the cause. Was that some kind of lefty elitism? A band of selfless brothers and sisters, o.k., but how to allocate resources, how to respond to individual needs, how about a grievance procedure (more important to many of us than money)? There were people (Leroy?) who argued, "You don't negotiate with the union," but that's what the union had taught us to do -- stand up for your rights! demand respect! demand the right to negotiate the terms and working conditions of your employment. We were telling the farm workers that, but it didn't apply to us?

The volunteer staff system seemed to be working so well for a while. Would some kind of grievance procedure or minimum pay have prolonged the movement, or undermined it?

Food for thought.

Doug Adair

(El Malcriado, 1965-1970)

(Grape, Lettuce boycotts, Philly, St. Louis, 1907-71)

Tenneco West, Ducor (grapes, under UFW contract) 1971-73

(Jail and probation, 1973-75)

Legal Department, Salinas, Coachella, 1975-77

David Freedman Co., Coachella (grapes, under UFW contract) 1977-88

Pato's Dream Date Gardens, Thermal (dates), 1980-present

(UFW pension, to present)

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/22/04

RE: My First Memories of the Union

Hey Emmy Lou and Abby. You both brought a smile to my face after a very long day. Cynthia and I had a lot of good times together in Delano. And you, Emmy, were in the middle of a lot of those times. Your mom is a very good person and she obviously did a good job with you. I ran into her a while back and she spoke of you and your family with much pride and love.

Abby, how are you and Jorge doing? I was hoping that we would see you guys at the Pictsweet contract celebration a couple of months ago. Jorge was part of that victory, and after all of Harry

Stang's crap, the victory was ever so sweet to enjoy among friends. Please give Jorge a big hug for me! Good night.

Viva la causa,

Barbara Macri-Ortiz

1969-1990, during which time I did just about every job there was to do in just about every field office and a couple of dozen boycott cities around the country.

Tom Dalzell, 5/22/04

RE: Free Speech Zones

Given history, it seems that we in the legal department were prematurely anti-volunteer.

The request of the lawyers in 1978 for an increase in our monthly pay from \$600 to \$1000 spawned a far broader debate on the volunteer system within the Union. We happily joined the debate, arguing that the volunteer system made it impossible for most workers to work for the Union for long because they did not have the safety net of middle class families that most of us had. We believed that the volunteer system was admirable, but that as we moved from a boycott-based organization to a worker-based trade union it was no longer practical. When the executive board voted in 1978, they did not vote on the legal department request, but on the broader issue of ending the volunteer system. As was the case with the hiring hall, the Union eventually changed its position, but not before huge losses.

Doug's remark about People's as a free-speech zone struck a nerve. For many years, dissent was tolerated, at least up to a point. For example, I remember vigorous opposition within the Union to the anti-illegals campaign of 1973-1974, and I don't remember anybody getting fired for speaking their mind on the issue or arguing that using the INS in a strike might not be a great long-term idea. It is possible that somebody was fired and I just don't remember it, but I do remember Barry Winograd expressing his opinion in strong terms to the Executive Board in early 1975 and the Executive Board expressing its opinion to Barry in even stronger terms and everybody then getting back to work.

By 1976, though, it seems that dissent - or even the appearance or suspicion of dissent - became grounds for purging. If you disagreed with the correct line you were an "asshole" and that was that. When Cesar turned to Synanon as a role model for the Union and embraced the game, which was developed as a tool of radical behavior modification for alcoholics and drug addicts, as a tool for internal control, it was pretty clear what his thinking was on free speech zones. You expect an absolute adherence to The Leader's thinking in a cult such as Synanon, but in a trade union? A social movement? Our Union? How did we get from Point A to Point B?

Tom Dalzell

El Malcriado, Philadelphia boycott, Legal Department

1968-1980

Kevin Michael Brown, 5/22/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

"Molly" Mallouf, who was hired to oversee the construction of the Delano Clinic, was paid a "modest" salary. I know because it was a sore point with me and I made my feelings known. A priest, I wish I remembered his name, got Molly and I together and mediated a conversation where we both were able to get our feelings out without rancor.

Molly was from Marin County and was a licensed contractor. I believe we "needed" that to convince the building officials that "we" knew what we were doing.

I think the pat "\$5/week + room/board" was a dream that Cesar had to keep us all equal and to show that there were no primadonnas in the organization. I feel that a more sensible, and voluntary, minimal salary for all (with the option to accept the \$5/week + room/board) might have worked better. The points about the lawyers was a good one.

Kevin M. Brown
69-73 Detroit, etc.

Kate Colwell, 5/23/04

RE: Volunteers

Sorry: Seems like another e-mail from me got on this list.

I think there were lots of ways people had access to more than \$5 per week. I remember how surprised I was when I found that out. Likewise, housing had a hierarchy. I'm not arguing for or against this.

Certainly doctors and lawyers and professionals that the union needed who had debts from school could not have served in the union unless there was some help with the loan payback; I think that was pretty common in the clinics.

Am I correct in my memory that NFWM staff had access to more than \$5 a week? Many farmworkers worked on staff all week and in the fields on the weekends and certainly if that's what they needed to do to take care of their families, that was the right thing to do. Was it ever necessary for everyone to put 100% of their efforts into the union? For Cesar, yes, but was that ever sustainable as we aged and had families?

I remember benefiting from an unspoken hierarchy on housing. After a few years of sharing rooms in very crowded boycott houses and in Delano, when a little house became open a friend and I (clinic staff) got to live there. It made life SO much easier, even if we were entertaining visiting clinic staff on our living room floor. Each having a bedroom of our own was a huge privilege and reward for service time. Also, from an outsider's perspective, housing in La Paz seemed positively luxurious compared to the boycott.

\$5 a week and communal living was fine for the short term and the young and single, but I think even Cesar knew there had to be accommodations for folks to stay on for the long run. There was the public \$5 and the private realities.

Kate Colwell

Dan Willett, 5/23/04

RE: brief update

Dan Willett, St. Louis and Los Angeles Boycott, 1976-77

Hello everybody,

After leaving the Boycott in Los Angeles, I moved back to St. Louis and finished college. My school bought the microfilmed records of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, a union of sharecroppers and tenant farmers in the mid-South in the 1930-40's. I was very moved to read the correspondence of members with the leadership. H.L. Mitchell was a co-founder of the STFU and went on college tours to promote the microfilm and memory of the STFU. I enjoyed talking with him in St. Louis and later in Milwaukee.

I stayed in touch with UFW staffers John Gardner and Julie Kerksick and joined them at a project of the New York Public Interest Research Group to apply community organizing to some good research on bank disinvestment in New York City. Later some of us moved to Milwaukee to work on jobs issues and organizing the unemployed. Over the past twenty years in Milwaukee I have worked at a variety of non-profits and labor unions. Even being in a city, there have been a couple of continuing connections to agriculture. Milwaukee is home to many Black people who moved here as part of a great migration from the South to the North after the mechanization of farming in the South. They brought parts of their rural culture, such as food and music, to Milwaukee and that really warms up the place. One job I had was doing church-based organizing about 75 miles north of Milwaukee. I worked with farmers who milked dairy cows and raised crops to feed the cows. They had work schedules like you would not believe. They milked their herds starting every eight hours, everyday, 365 days a year.

I am married and have a twelve-year-old daughter and seven-year-old son. I am lucky to have Beth, Ann and Jack.

Ellen Eggers, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

I know that Jerry always got paid something, but my understanding was that began because he hustled his own salary from the UAW or somewhere, very early on. That led to the other lawyers being paid a similar amount. I believe that is the origin of the difference between the other volunteers and the attys.

But years later, after 1980, after Sister Florence was killed in the car accident, they had to hire someone to replace her in financial management and so they found Bryce Basey in Bakersfield, an accountant. He was paid about \$30 grand I think. He's the one who ended up ripping off the union for a lot of money and I believe ended up in federal prison. I don't know of others who were paid staff, but I'm sure there were more. Ellen Eggers.. 1972-75 80-87

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Greetings to my Law Apprenticeship Supervising Attorney, Ellen Eggers, and to all of the other volunteers checking their e-mail, most of whom I know and remember, some of whom I never had the pleasure to know,

I have been reading the e-mails as time permits, but have been reluctant to engage in the exchange because of the initial tone, which thank God, appears to be dissipating. I spent 20 years of my life with the UFW (1969 - 1990), and then spent the next decade working as a legal aid attorney for Channel Counties Legal Services in Oxnard, specializing in housing and education/school law, and representing many farmworkers and children of farm workers in these areas and others. Among those I represented were many who were UFW members at one time or another, including several dozen whom I trained or represented in grievances and arbitrations during my time in the UFW.

In 2001, I started my own practice {working out of my house} when CCLSA lost its funding. In February, 2001, I got a call from Arturo Rodriguez asking for some help with the Pictsweet campaign, and I subsequently had the good fortune to represent the UFW and the Pictsweet workers for three years during their monumental struggle that resulted in an ALRB Order imposing a contract at Pictsweet. I was privileged to be part of another historic chapter in the UFW story. If anyone is interested in the details, an article about my experiences is being published in the June edition of "Citations", the Ventura County Bar Association's magazine.

I have a lot of thoughts which I may be sharing with you over time, as time permits. For now let me just say that the chapter involving Bryce Basey was one of the most, if not the most painful experience for Cesar and for me. I was in charge of the legal department at the time and had the dubious task of breaking the news to Cesar that Bryce had embezzled UFW funds. Ellen is right that Bryce was one of the few paid staff at the time, and probably was the highest paid staff person. So much for the argument that the Union would have been better off by paying the staff. I always was on the side of a volunteer staff, both for the practical reason that if we paid people, we would have a lot less of them running around, and for the philosophical reason that if someone is willing to work for next to nothing s/he is probably very committed to La Causa [which is evident from all of your stories].

My feelings have not changed over the years because of my personal experiences outside of the Union. I have found that almost without exception, those who make the most contribute the least (relatively speaking) to their organizations. We used to tell new volunteers, don't worry about the money, you won't have time to spend it anyway. In my life since the UFW, I have found that for the most part the more money people make, the more time they devote to spending it, and of course that means the less time they dedicate to their employer/organization. What happened in the Union was truly extraordinary for many reasons, not the least of which was the fact that so

many worked for so little for so long with so much passion on behalf of the farm workers' struggle. We not only grew the Union but look around, ex-UFW volunteers are at the forefront of many grass roots and union campaigns around the country. That is no coincidence. Cesar organized a very disciplined and motivated social justice army, Fred Ross taught us the practical skills we needed to succeed in our tasks, and the rest is history. If we are to do anything meaningful in this forum, I think we should focus on analyzing and passing on what it was that we learned/did that made a positive difference, rather than dwelling on our own personal painful experiences that were part of the mix. This is so because we were involved in something that was much bigger than any of us or all of us, but it was successful because of the contributions of each one of us.

And most of us have continued to contribute to one cause or another with our expertise, our energy, and our experience, including the skills and persistence we learned in the Union. . . .

Let's keep this forum moving, positive and productive. With what is going on in the world right now, we certainly don't need to rag on our movement or each other. And yes, the new generation is in need of a hero. We all worked for one. Let's not lose sight of that.

Si se puede!

Barbara Macri-Ortiz

Marshall Ganz, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

What nonsense, Barbara.

Has your own work been of less value since you began to earn a salary? Since the mid-1970s, the issue was never about money. It was about control, especially after Cesar formed his alliance with Chuck Dietrich. It worked, too. Cesar wound up with much more control over what was left of the union, but much less power to improve the lives of farm workers.

This is the first forum that I'm aware of in which all kinds of people who contributed to the effort to organize farm workers with the UFW have had a free and open opportunity to evaluate with one another the lessons learned from that experience - lessons not only of personal value, but of value in learning how to contribute to making our world a better place.

Some of those lessons were about things to emulate -- the early creativity of the union, Cesar's gifts for strategy, his understanding of commitment, etc. Other lessons were about things to avoid -- the way the union turned on its own, how Cesar lost his bearings, the consequences of loss of accountability, etc.

The fact remains that farm workers today are almost as unorganized, unrepresented and with as little protection throughout California as when we began our efforts some 40 years ago. You may have fond memories of your personal experience. And you may have continued to contribute as you could in your own way - as many of us have.

But the reality is that the union defaulted on its major commitment -- to build a national union for farm workers. Learning from why a movement with such promise, capacity, and support ultimately dropped the ball is just as important as learning from why it got far as it did.

Marshall

Carlos LeGerrette, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

There were a couple very important, non-administrative staff who received more than usual \$4 and room and board. Can you guess who they were, and their department?

Carlos LeGerrette

('66-'78, SD Boycott, La Paz, San Ysidro)

Deborah Vollmer, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

I'm not absolutely sure about this, but besides the lawyers, was it the mechanics who serviced the union cars who received more than the room and board and \$5 a week?

Deborah

Bob Aderhold, 5/23/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Debbie, I can solemnly attest that this was not the case – at least during my time. Bob Aderhold, 73-78.

Marc Coleman, 5/24/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Hey Bobby – how are you doing?

You're mostly right. While we got the same \$5 as everyone else, there was a time in mid-1977 in Delano when the union had received some JTPA training grant or whatever the program was before 1977 – CETA or whatever. I don't know who applied for the grant, but the Union was given money to train farmworkers to be mechanics. Remember we had training classes in the mornings? Anyway as part of that grant, we in Delano got significantly more than \$5 a week and I think the trainees got paid – for the period of the grant then we went back to \$5 a week. That's what I remember.

Marc Coleman (1975-77, La Paz, Delano)

Glenn Rothner, 5/24/04 (1)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Thanks to my old friends Tom Dalzell and Doug Adair, I have been inspired to submit my first message to the documentation project – on the subject of volunteerism vs. staff salaries. I have strong views on the subject, both from my time in the Union and from the years I have since spent representing other unions in private practice. A bit of background.

I came to the Union in 1974, as a law student working in Delano for the summer. Within a week of my arrival, I knew I would return the following year, after graduating. Ben Maddock agreed to hire me as an organizer if Jerry Cohen had no room for me on the legal staff, but Jerry came through, and I returned after the bar exam in August 1975, a month before the ALRA took effect.

Until I received my bar results in late November of that year, I wasn't eligible for the 600/month retainer, so I was paid the standard \$5/week. But when I received word that I had passed, I told Jerry to keep me at \$5/week, because I couldn't justify receiving more than the organizers. (Later on, I entered the slippery, wage-earning slope by taking \$400/month and then the full lawyers' retainer of \$600/month; don't ask me today to recall the moral rationale I devised for succumbing first partially then fully to temptation.)

As time went on, however, and my commitment to the Union became more profound, I grew frustrated with (1) the tremendous turnover rate among the organizers and other non-legal staff volunteers and (2) the reality that few members were taking, or staying in, positions on the Union's staff. I joined the legal department's request for an increase in the retainer (I requested \$900/month, not \$1,000), not for myself but because I wanted to engage the Executive Board on the subject of the need (1) to recruit members to the staff and (2) to pay a livable wage to all staff so as to retain talented people once they had developed skills and expertise. I thought our proposal would be the catalyst for that important debate, and, overly optimistically, I believed that a livable wage for all Union staff would soon become a reality. Of course, our gambit didn't work, and that was the beginning of the end of the mid-1970's legal department. I left at the end of August 1978.

Those were some of the most rewarding years of my life, and I continue to count among my closest friends the people with whom I worked. Ellen Greenstone is one of my law partners, and Dorothy Martinez (married to Larry Abrams) is one of our secretaries. Among our clients and comrades in the broader labor movement are many more former UFW lawyers and volunteers. Seeing email from Cynthia Bell, Abby Flores, Jean Eilers, Steve Hopcraft, Doug Adair and others is a joy after all these years.

On the other hand, over 25 years of involvement in the broader labor movement has only served to reinforce my view about the promise of the UFW that, at least while I was on staff, went unfulfilled. Few unions reach their full potential. The ideal is not to focus solely on achieving better wages, benefits and working conditions but to strive at the same time to empower workers to take greater control over their own work lives. The unorganized workplace is a dictatorship, but substituting a hierarchical union as a more benign form of control isn't enough, at least in my view. True union success and worker dignity come only when organized workers participate democratically in controlling their own destiny. Toward that end, there is a difference between mobilizing workers and empowering them. The UFW often did the former well, the latter not well at all. Empowerment happens not by chance but when: the rank-and-file is encouraged to exercise democratic rights; potential leaders are developed – that is, identified and encouraged; leadership opportunities are made available; and both responsibility and authority are conferred.

Looking back, the seemingly persuasive justification offered by Cesar and others against staff salaries -- that they inevitably produce a less animated, bureaucratic union -- was entirely counterproductive when it came to the fostering of internal union democracy. Some ardent volunteers, among them some of the most dedicated and hardest working, came to adopt the Union as though it was their own. It wasn't; it was the members'. But very few members were on staff, and the rest were given little or no opportunity to influence policy, strategy, tactics, or day-to-day administration. Thus, the volunteer staff approach, over time, engendered a less animated, less empowered membership.

Others are more qualified than I to speak to additional reasons for this lack of member influence and empowerment, and I've gone on too long as it is. But for my part, the legal department's choice to engage on the question of volunteerism vs. salary was a good way to begin a broader debate within the entire Union about internal democracy and member empowerment. Had we succeeded, the next 10-15 years might have been more productive for the Union, for the cause of improvement of farm workers' wages and benefits, and, most importantly, for the building of a farm worker controlled union, the misdeeds of the growers and their Republican allies notwithstanding.

Glenn Rothner (Legal Department: Summer 1974, Delano; August 1975- August 1978, Delano and Salinas).

Kevin Michael Brown, 5/24/04

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

This was a well thought out and considerate post and you managed to do it without calling someone else's thoughts "nonsense."

Kevin M. Brown 1969-1973

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (1)

RE: My First Memories of the Union

Hi Barbara,

Wasn't it a joy hearing from Emmy? You probably have some interesting stories to share about your son and bringing him up at La Paz. It couldn't have been easy for you. I would travel from San Ysidro to La Paz to help Helen at the Credit Union and bring Elisa (daughter). I used to keep her next to me while I worked. It was difficult concentrating on my work and on her. One trip up, I decided to take her to Casa Nana. What a big mistake that was. Her cries traveled up from the

basement into the window where I sat. It was the most difficult two hours of my life (that's all I could handle). When I went pick her up, her face was all banged up and her nose was scraped and bleeding. She had fallen down the backdoor steps. I wanted to yell at Gordon Williamson. Then I saw that tired look on his face like he was being run ragged. They were clearly understaffed. There were so many kids of various ages. That was the first and last Casa Nana stay for my little girl.

Jorge sends his regards. There is always a lot of crap at the negotiations. Jorge isn't much on celebrations unless they involve his grandchildren. He too sends his regards. Take care and talk to you soon. abby flores rivera/ richgrove/ delano

Mark Pitt, 5/24/04 (1)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

I do not know to what extent any of this really matters, but as I recall there were different arrangements made for a lot of different people. If someone was being recruited to "volunteer", and they had college loans, car payments etc. these payments were taken over by the union and payments were made on behalf of the individual while they work and received the \$5.00 per week. This was not just lawyers and other professionals, but also just regular boycott staff and I am sure others.

I did not recall this being a big issue with the people I worked with over the years.

Ellen Eggers, 5/24/04 (1)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

That's very true...When I was on the boycott in 72, we only got the \$5...by the time I returned to La Paz in 80, the system was much different. Families got clothing allowances in Sept, when the kids went off to school, I think it was \$75 per child. Bills were paid, if the decision was made that the union wanted and needed someone, and they had outstanding bills. But that's when volunteer applications had started... something we never saw in the early days. The applications allowed the union to take a look at your financial picture and decided if the cost of taking you on was too much, given what you had to offer.

Mark Pitt, 5/24/04 (2)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

I worked from 1972-1977 and the system was in place the whole time. I know it was in place on the boycott in 1972.

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/24/04

RE: COMMENT ON GLENN ROTHNER POSTING

Glenn Rothner,

I enjoyed reading (and now thinking about) your posting regarding the use of volunteers versus the use of paid staff. I have a couple of questions and/or comments:

1. You say the legal department raised the salary issue with the executive board and apparently they turned it down. Do you know what the vote was – or was there a vote? Who was on the executive board at that time? Were reasons given for rejecting salaries?
2. From the very early days of the NFWA and then later in the UFW, there were always some staff members who were paid salaries. (I was one of them.) I hasten to add that these salaries were more in the nature of "stipends" and this method of payment essentially bundled together family expenses, housing and car expenses, which were paid for with one check. The person on salary paid his/her own bills instead of the UFW or the Service Center paying the bills individually. Despite this method of payment, I know that Bonnie and I considered ourselves volunteers. I'm sure the attorneys at that time also considered themselves as such.

3. The National Farm Worker Ministry also used the stipend “salary-system” to pay its staff members and in those early years we certainly considered them volunteers.

4. I believe the real issue you raise is whether paying people a pittance – either paying the bills directly or paying them with one check to the volunteer – or paying staff a living-wage-salary is the best way to build a movement. Of course there are plusses and minuses with each approach. Paying a stipend means people won’t retire in the movement and will move on much sooner. (I daresay staff turnover might be very advantageous to a movement.) It also means that staff members are more likely to be motivated by the cause itself rather than the money they are paid. The stipend approach costs less money for the movement but also causes a great deal of human grief and anxiety and some unhappiness which has to be dealt with or not, as the case may be.

5. I am of the opinion that volunteers (stipend or salaried) should not have been appointed/elected to the executive board of the farmworker movement. The role of volunteers in building a movement, I believe, is much different than those for whom (and with whom) the movement is being built.

6. I am very hesitant, especially after reading the essay of Mark Sharwood (1976-1982), to draw too many conclusions about all the UFW could have accomplished if only they had done such and such or had done it differently. The reality was – and remains the same today – California’s largest industry does not want “unions” and agribusiness employers hold great sway over workers even when they exercise their secret ballot rights and even when an election is won decisively there is absolutely no assurance that a contract will result.

I, too, would appreciate it if the responses to my posting (if there are any) do not begin with “LeRoy, such nonsense!” Thank you for that.

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Delano, S.F. Bay Area, Santa Monica, Delano, La Paz and L.A.

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (2)

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Hello, Chris. Some former volunteers may not know about the English school. Could you please expand on it and its objective? Some of the visions Cesar had to empower farm workers were looked upon by some of the staff at the time as frivolous or as something that would never work. Cesar got criticized for the Fred Ross Sr. School of Collective Bargaining. As I remember, he picked a small group of staff volunteers to attend but none of the current Collective Bargaining staff. My husband was one of the twelve to be selected and trained. He got a lot of negative criticism which he could have handled but when it came from David Burciaga, the Director of Collective Bargaining Department for the union at the time, that was extremely discouraging. What kind of encouragement could he expect from David who thought him incapable of performing the work? My husband told me back in 1981 or 1982 that David Burciaga told him, in regards to the Fred Ross School, “Do you think people are born smart?” What David was insinuating to him is that people like himself, as a farm worker, are not born smart so therefore cannot be trained to do something as sophisticated as negotiations. David was always talking about Cesar and putting down the negotiator trainees. My husband never said anything to Cesar about it, but I certainly wish he had because he was the reason so many trainees left. This is my question to all of you? During the times that Cesar began the various training schools to empower farm workers and to train volunteers, too, how many volunteer staff were of the opinion that it was just another one of Cesar’s crazy ideas? How many of you out there thought it a waste of time and that the union had better, more urgent things to do? It takes time to create leadership and Cesar was doing that even while the union was running at full speed. Now, in retrospect, we are saying that the union needed to train-up leaders and empower the workers, but when Cesar was attempting to do just that, he got a lot of criticism. Let me hear your thoughts on this.abby/richgrove/delano

Ellen Eggers, 5/24/04 (2)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Okay, Glen, Marshall and Tom Dalzell, as well as Barbara Macri...have led me to join in this discussion, since I was very much in "both worlds" in terms of the volunteer stipend and the "old" legal department that operated out of Salinas, that was truly a good operation, in my humble opinion. I started on the LA boycott and because of Jerry and the legal dept work, decided to go to law school. I did in 1975. While in law school I worked one summer in La Paz, doing budgets for Salinas legal. In conversations with Cesar, we talked about the stipend and I was a firm believer in it, since that's what I had always been paid. I told Cesar that when I returned as a lawyer, I would be happy to stay on as a volunteer. With no kids and no law school bills, it was easy to do and what I was used to. Cesar was, of course, delighted. I sometimes wonder if I was partly to blame for his strong reaction to the legal dept's request for more salary. My understanding was that when confronted, by the group, with a request for more money, he reacted very strongly: "Yah, you can have more money, but you have to cut your dept in half, and everyone has to move to La Paz, where I will run the show." I suppose he felt he was calling their bluff, but it ended up completely destroying what was previously known as the Legal Dept. All of that was taking place while I was away in law school. The first I knew about any of it was when I called Jerry to say I was ready to graduate and he told me that they were "laying off" lawyers, but to send a letter and he'd see what he could do...I was quite disappointed and decided if they didn't need people I could work somewhere else, so I did. Three months after I had taken a job in Michigan, the "new" legal dept, under Marco Lopez, called and begged me to come back to California. I did a year later, in 1980. By then, Jerry and all of the lawyers that had been my reason for wanting to be a union lawyer, were gone. (I have to say that the new legal dept was also a fun place to work...I was enthused and met new people and found a friend for life, Vickie Lopez, my son's godmother.) When I got my bar results in May, 1980, I went out to the north unit to tell Cesar, where he was meeting with the new paid reps, and he introduced me to the group and told them the news and they all applauded me...very nice, until a year later, I was sitting across the table from those same gentlemen, taking their depositions as part of the federal lawsuit that they filed against Cesar. It took a lot of long hours of convincing to get me on board with that case. Barbara Macri convinced me of the rightness of our position, but it was a hard sell, and I'm not sure I ever really felt it. honestly, it was very heartbreaking for me. My heart was not in it. I got my juices up for it, by focusing on the opposing attorneys, lefty lawyers who specialized in suing unions that were not representing their members (moan!). It certainly was not what I had envisioned when I went to law school to "help farmworkers." In reading these discussions, I am hearing really for the first time, the positions of the people who were already gone by the time I came back. It helps me a lot to see the big picture, and I can't help but agree with those who say that this discussion really needs to take place. Cesar was wonderful in so many, many ways... and I loved him dearly the whole time that I worked for the union... but there simply is no question that he had flaws, and he insisted, at some point, on immunity from criticism. I saw it first hand. Whether that same thing would happen to any of us, under the same circumstances, is anyone's guess, but I suspect that it would. Some of us are able to just accept Cesar's flaws better than others. The folks who worked for years for the union and loved it wholeheartedly, but now feel somewhat bitter, are the ones who were personally affected by Cesar's shortcomings. That only makes sense. I have to say that while I had many a struggle and fight with Cesar, esp after I had children and was living in La Paz, I managed to leave on good terms. What embittered me, to some extent happened after I left. It was the way in which the executive board of the union, led by Cesar, allowed Chris to resign as Secretary Treasurer in 1989. That whole story caused me to be deeply disappointed in a lot of people in "high places" because it was unnecessary and very hurtful. Out of respect for Chris, I will not go any further with my comments, but that whole issue helped me to understand more about why some of the other folks felt so burned in previous "situations" with Cesar. I loved Cesar as much as anyone, but love does not mean that you agree with everything they do. I confronted Cesar myself, in 1990, about this issue and I must say he responded very badly, I thought. What started out as a friendly and warm conversation, turned into him essentially screaming obscenities and making wild accusations about me, Jerry, Chris...it was pretty shocking actually. He was really off the wall. I think it really surprised him that he was being confronted with facts, by someone who was no longer with the union, and therefore not intimidated by him or

in an atty-client relationship with him. He pretty much flipped out as a result. People really need to be open to criticism... it's pretty basic stuff. I understand why Cesar found that so hard to do, given what was at stake, his identity with the union, the threats on his life in the early years, etc., but from what I hear, he wasn't always like that, at least in the early days. By the time I returned from law school, however, he was able to look you in the eye and say, "Black is white, and white is black, you GOT it!?" It was very clear that you had a choice... agree or leave. By 1987, after having spent 7 more years with the union, as a lawyer, I knew that I needed to move on. I still so much appreciate what he did, I really do, but a lot of others did it with him... for many, many years... and they should be given lots of credit as well. They include Marshall, Jessica, Gilbert, Phillip, Tom Dalzell, the legal dept lawyers, and many others who were "purged" while I was away at school, after Prop 14. It would be nice if we could be open, even now, to hearing criticism about what took place. Since the union is still operating, it might actually be helpful if it could be heard and considered, without fear that Cesar's legacy will be spoiled. I don't think for one minute that will happen.

Glenn Rothner, 5/24/04 (2)

RE: COMMENT ON GLENN ROTHNER'S POSTING

Thanks.

We weren't told what the vote was, or whether it was put to a vote. Perhaps Jerry, Marshall, or others know. We were simply told that Cesar had decided that paying lawyers even a retainer, i.e., a pittance, had been a mistake and he was going to recruit a new set of truly volunteer lawyers to take our place. I have a Union poster in my office that was distributed at that point. It shows a sun rising behind a large black eagle and reads, "Cesar Chavez needs 12 attorneys." In smaller print it says "bills paid, living expenses." In dollars, the new "true volunteers" could have ended up with greater overall compensation than we were given, depending on the extent of their bills and living expenses. Thus, I and others interpreted the response to our proposal as a statement that people like us, that is, people who wished to debate this serious question, were not welcome. I chose to leave quietly.

Regarding your movements need turnover point, during my time on the UFW staff we had the opportunity to solidify election and contract victories and begin to establish the UFW as a functioning trade union. At that point, volunteer staff turnover, along with insufficient delegation of authority, was standing in the way of completing contract negotiations, collecting dues revenue, and enforcing negotiated contracts. Your point is less well taken, I think, if we are talking about an organization, like the UFW, whose overriding purpose is to establish itself for the long term as a member-controlled, service organization.

Marshall Ganz, 5/24/04

RE: COMMENT ON GLENN ROTHNER'S POSTING

LeRoy,

I'm surprised at such sensitivity to my use of the word "nonsense" to describe the kind of self-righteous claims about what is and isn't "truth" in the comments to which I responded. I actually thought I had written with restraint and good humor, given what had been said.

As for the content of the conversation, it might be of interest to recall that the issue of salaries to which Cesar ultimately responded by eliminating the legal department was raised first by the field office directors (Bobby De La Cruz, Roberto Garcia, Humberto Gonzales, and others) at a session at Kern River Park in 1977. The paralegals had also made a modest salaries, prompting a visit by Dolores, Mack and I to Salinas, where we met with them, explained why this would be a problem, and that was the end of it. Cesar was far more concerned, however, by the field office directors who were arguing their family needs, hopes for some stability, etc. merited greater consideration than they were receiving. While they were being stalled, however, the lawyers came along with their request, affording Cesar an opportunity to make the much more easily isolated lawyers the issue rather than the field office directors. But, again, as so many have observed, the union never

did have a pure volunteer system. And, Leroy, there was a big difference between the life style you could afford in McFarland and the life style available to others who earned \$5.00/week and did not think it was the same thing as a "stipend." A modest salary is very different from no salary at all, especially in the independence that it affords the person who receives it. .

So an important question to ask is why Cesar choose the moment he did in 1978 to polarize the union around this issue. I'd be curious about what people think.

The Board had two votes on the volunteer system in the summer of 1978. In the first vote, there was a 5/4 split. Cesar, Dolores, Richard, Pete, and Gilbert voted to take the union to an all volunteer system. Eliseo, Jessica, Mack and I voted to begin moving away from it. What do you think it meant that at the time it was everyone under 40 vs. everyone over 40? Within a couple of years, everyone under 40 was gone, leaving Cesar free to replace us with a cadre of far younger people, with little memory of the early, most effective years of the UFW and little knowledge of what had changed.

I also find your argument puzzling (but, rest assured, not "nonsense") that the growers were too powerful anyway so there's not point in asking why the union failed.

For many years we had the growers on the run, successfully enough that we began to change many things in the day to day lives of farm workers. How did that happen? Why did we succeed where others had failed? And why did it all grind to a halt?

The whole idea of whether volunteers paid subsistence, organizers paid modest salaries, or officials paid the big bucks is "good" or "bad" for a movement has to be looked at in context doesn't it? Most successful social movements (often sustained by the volunteer work of volunteers) give rise to new institutions (that often hire salaried people) that remain more or less accountable to their constituencies, depending on the strength of their internal accountability mechanisms. Movements don't last forever. They are just that -- movements from one situation to another. That's why each generation finds it must face new challenges, identify new sources of injustice, and find new ways to work at making the world a better place. The tragedy is when a promising social movement cuts itself off in midstream, fails to institutionalize the changes it fought for, and turns instead to remembering "how it was in the day" in ways that become increasingly removed from reality.

That's what happened to the UFW.

Marshall

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/24/04

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Hi:

Great discussion and very good questions so I guess I'll weigh in with some random thoughts.

I can absolutely see some good on both sides of this issue. I never had any experience working in the field offices, but with the boycott organizing, so much of it was based on building relationships with the supporters. In that regard, I think it was a huge plus that we were volunteers-- the supporters saw the full-time staff as giving so much and when we asked someone to come out on a picket line, host a house meeting, etc., I think the fact that we were volunteers really helped to get people out there. (Even now, I can't help wondering about the current petition gatherers I run into at the supermarket-- I often want to ask them, "Are you doing this because you really believe in it, or is it just a way to earn some money?") I think having a volunteer staff definitely gave us some moral currency, especially in the cities.

At the same time, I know first hand how hard it was to build up a large support committee and how let down a lot of the supporters felt due to constant staff changes, people leaving, etc. Most of the time, the support committees didn't get to the point where they fully operated on their own-- they needed the staff person to be the lead/ set the tone/ fire everyone up, and we often ended up reinventing the wheel because of constant turnover, and this was not a good thing in the long run

on the boycott... I also worked in a lot of different capacities at La Paz where the ball had been dropped due to staff changes, and it often seemed like once you'd get things straightened out to the point where you were on top it, it was time to be transferred to a new job and the ball would probably get dropped all over again...

As far as giving people a living wage, one of the times I felt the most hurt came up around this issue. I came on staff at age 17 with no bills whatsoever, always worked for the \$5 (and later \$10) per week volunteer stipend, and never really felt a need to ask for more. But, in 1983, after I'd been working for the union for 9 years, I had a very scary experience with my old car. (I had used the last of my personal savings to buy that car, which I used for union work-- it was a '62 Chevy Nova wagon, and we took it to the boycott in Seattle, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Detroit. During Prop. 14, Cesar's guards even used it briefly because it was a station wagon and they could fit the dogs in the back of it.) In 1983, I was driving to Fresno for the convention with both my two-month-old son and my 2 year old son in the car when the brakes went completely out. This was one scary experience; luckily the brakes failed just as I was getting off the freeway in Fresno and there was a slight incline on the off-ramp which allowed me to coast to a stop. At the time, I didn't really need a union car assigned for work purposes because I was working in La Paz. I did some research and personally went to ask Cesar if I could get approval for a monthly payment to buy a newer used car-- I think at the time it might have been around \$150 or \$170 per month, which I didn't think was unreasonable given the fact that I'd worked my ass off for the union and my car was run down because of all the miles I put on it doing union work. Nonetheless, my request was turned down flat and boy did I feel that like a slap in the face! (My Mom ultimately gave me the cash to buy a used car.) In retrospect, that one decision did a lot towards pushing me to eventually leave the union.

I remember when I first joined staff, the \$5 a week stipend exactly matched the weekly allowance I had been given as a teenager by my parents, so it didn't require a downward adjustment in my spending habits. To me that seems kind of apropos because on a certain level the union ultimately kept the volunteer staff in a kind of prolonged parent/ child relationship – there really was no way to resolve these issues. You lived with it as long as you could, but ultimately, it's like leaving home... we all do it sooner or later.

Terry (Vasquez) Scott
1973-1988

Georgia (McFadden) Lyga, 5/24/04

RE: Sister Winifred

The 80 year old mother of the cellmate of a friend I visit in prison asked if I knew Sister Winnie – “she worked for Chavez.” That was the best she could do – no last name, no dates, no place. She thought she was a Sister of St. Joseph or maybe Mercy. She would very much like to get in touch with her again. Oh, there was a description – “tall as a peanut.” Ring a bell with anyone?

Georgia Lyga (formerly, McFadden)

Delano, Lamont, Colton '71-'73

Karen Schlossman Castle, 5/24/04

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Salaries? Stipends? Clothing allowances? Bills paid? Medical benefits? I sure wish that I had known about all that during the year I was at La Paz ('78-'79) When I signed on as a volunteer to teach at the English school (FIELD) I was expecting the usual \$5/week. I was then told that it was a government grant program that required that I be paid a salary of \$600/month. Ok, cool, said recent college grad with all sorts of debt owed. Then I was strongly encouraged to redirect the salary back to the Union and take the \$5, which I did. Gladly. Ah, the innocence of youth.

During that year I ate more bread, tortillas, dried cereal and beans than ever before or since... wore used clothing from moldy piles of donations... went untreated for high fever and strep throat on

several occasions (exacerbated, no doubt, by the cold humid conditions in that old TB sanitarium)... and defaulted on my student loan at great subsequent penalty. As thanks I was summarily sent away during one of Cesar's classic purges. Thank goodness I kept that last paycheck in "defiance" hahaha (and believe me I sure felt guilty at the time!)

I was aware of inequity, just did not concern myself with the details. On second thought, perhaps it is just as well that I didn't know. Maybe I would have left before I got the boot from Cesar and Dolores.

Karen (Schlossman) Castle
La Paz '78-'79

p.s. what am I doing now? I'm a foster mom with one adopted daughter (age 4) teaching Spanish at a local high school in the Los Angeles area.

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (3)

RE: Everyone can do this

Hi Cindy Bell,

It is good to hear from you and that you are well. I believe the last time we saw each other was in 1987 when I was working at the La Paz Villa in Parlier. I was never able to find out where you were in later years. Just hearing your name opened up a floodgate of memories for me. I had forgotten about the frightening incident when you were chased down with Emmy in the car until she spoke about it. Those were incredible times. By the way, my dad passed away in 2000, still sharp as a tack. My stepmom died in 1993. Thought you might want to know. I am at home today from what I fear may be food poisoning (seafood/ yesterday). I can never get through all the e-mails. So I won't try. I remember so many people, though, and it has been interesting hearing what everyone has to say so many years later. Take care and write to let everyone know some of things you did during your years with the union. We need to document all the wonderful experiences. You might want to start by telling us who gave you the nickname "Campana." Okay, nevermind. Begin by telling us about the incident above.

sin mas, abby/ richgrove/ delano

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (4)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Hi Terry. It's me, your "Nina." I have wanted to e-mail you for a while. When the Project first started, it took me a while to figure out it was you. I am happy for you and your new life with your husband. The last 6 time I recall seeing you was at Cesar's funeral. I was upset about your car incident and that your request for a new used car was turned down. I certainly understand your reaction. Sometimes I wonder if we shouldn't have been more vocal. You are not going to believe this but a similar situation happened to my family in 1966. My dad had a station wagon, the answer to any picket line. Before long, he lost almost all control over the vehicle. Someone wanted to take it and be the driver but my dad refused, thank goodness. However, daily our wagon was used for carting picket signs, carrying workers to the lines, you name it. It started getting pretty beat up. The straw that broke the camel's back was when people continued smoking inside the car even when my dad told them not to. That really angered my dad. He almost quit the strike. Then it started breaking down, and you guessed it. There was no money for repairs. What my dad finally did was talk to my brothers but the repairs were too costly. They traded it in for a VW bug. Not a good choice for a family of ten, but that car lasted many years even though it was a tight squeeze when we traveled. That was one lesson I never forgot. You see, it was either have a car for the union or one for the family. My dad made the choice of having one for the family. We lived ten miles outside of town and depended on our car. Cesar's car also died out and was never repaired. I might have told you the story if I had known so you could have been a little wiser at La Paz. However, that doesn't change the fact that what happened to you was unfair. It would have been a lot easier for the union to purchase a used car and that is what they should have done.

I sometimes look back and think about what I had to go without, while others asked and got it! I didn't mind because I was single. It would have been a whole different matter if I was married with children. Cesar came in February before he passed away to invite my husband and I to return to La Paz. I wanted to, badly, but I was afraid of putting my kids through it. We said no and that is the one decision I often wonder about. Would it have been better for my children? I will never know. sin mas/ abby f. rivera/ richgrove/ delano

Vickie Lopez, 5/24/04

RE: Legal Dept.

Hi Abby, Ellen, Chris, Barbara, Mary Mecartney and others –

I have been following the discussion but haven't had time to respond lately because we are in the middle of final exams and, as a teacher, I am swamped, trying to get mounds of papers graded and a myriad of other things done before graduation this Friday.

It is wonderful to hear how all of you are doing and knowing that we are remembering the positive things we learned from the union and that it was a unique experience never to be forgotten. I also made lifelong friends in the union, none better than Ellen Eggers, my *comadre*. I thought I would add my 2 cents worth at this point. I worked in the legal department as office manager, litigation secretary and paralegal coordinator from 1979-1981. I suffered through the transition of the old legal department departing the union, and the incredible task of inheriting 400 ALRB cases and who knows how many other criminal and civil cases, and moving the entire legal department to La Paz. During the transition I was in the Salinas legal office for about 8 months and it was heartbreaking to see such wonderful litigators, like Jerry Cohen, Sandy Nathan, Kirsten Zerger, Ellen Greenstone, Tom Dalzell, George Lazar and many others wrap up their cases and leave with sadness and bitterness in their hearts. It was not about the money, it was definitely about control. Cesar was bound and determined to have control over the department, hence bring it to La Paz. I just wanted what was best for the union, and Cesar and the board believed having the department close to the other administrative departments would be best, especially in light of the new technology (computers in La Paz were so huge they took up an entire room).

The Salinas Field Office was upset about the turn of events with the attorneys and were quite hostile to those of us who were stepping in to move the department to La Paz. They made my life miserable and there were days I felt they, instead of the growers, were our enemies. Dolores Huerta was a great support at the time and she recruited the Bruce Church workers to assist us on moving day. Another great person was Larry Abrams, the litigation secretary and office manager at the old department. His dedication was awesome. He stayed on for several months after the attorneys left to train me. I will never forget his patience with me and I was honored to work with him.

As for pay, I was paid the standard \$5 or \$10 a week, but my school loan bill of \$80 per month was paid by the union, as were my husband's (Marco Lopez) school loans. The volunteer attorneys also received a clothing allowance to purchase clothing for court and ALRB hearings. I did not receive that allowance as I worked only in La Paz. The new legal department was made up of young energetic attorneys. In addition to Marco Lopez, Ellen Eggers and Diana Lyons (who worked out of Sacramento doing appellate work) there was Carlos Alcala, Frank Fernandez and his wife, Carmen. Later, Freddy Chavez (Richard's son) joined the group. It was actually fun working in the Legal Dept. once we left Salinas and got down to La Paz. I will never forget the day Marco and I went to Marcos Camacho's home in Fresno to talk him into dropping out of Fresno State and joining the union as a paralegal. He was eager, but his dad (a union supporter and former farmworker) did not want Marcos to drop out of school. Marco Lopez promised Marcos' dad that Marcos would one day become an attorney, the union way. Thanks to the efforts of Ellen Eggers' UFW Law School, Marcos, Barbara Macri-Ortiz, Ned Dunphy and others became attorneys. I became an attorney much later due in large part to my experience in the legal department and the encouragement of several union attorneys, including Ellen.

I consider my experience with the union rich beyond what money can buy, and definitely a preparation for many other experiences I have had over the years. (P.S. I guess I was one of the

few people who actually enjoyed playing “The Game.” It could be incredibly fun. There were times I laughed so hard I thought it would rupture my insides.)

Vickie Lopez, La Paz & Salinas 1977 - 1981

Carlos Le Gerrette, 5/24/04

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

For some reason, I'm not getting all the emails, while my wife, Linda, is. Quien sabe.

If you recall, I threw out the question re the two non-administrative staff members who received more than the \$5, R&B. Reading through Linda's emails, Debbie Vollmer was correct. It was the two mechanic brothers, Melvin and Pete Trejo. Yesterday I was talking to Melvin (we're compadres) and I asked him how he was able to negotiate his salary. He said I negotiated for him.

Cesar had a tremendous appreciation for the mechanics and the development of the Transportation Dept. The Trejos and I grew up together in what used to be the Old Town barrio of San Diego. Now (after the State moved out the Mexicans), that barrio is Old Town State Park. I asked them to join. They did. Cesar knew one hour after meeting with Melvin (first of the brothers to move to La Paz), he had the first professional mechanic for the Union.

I'm sure in Cesar's head he was thinking how much money Melvin would save the Union just in the rebuilding of the many motors that Marshall and Delores would burn up. Sorry, Marshall!

Carlos LeGerrette
('66-'78, SD Boycott, La Paz, San Ysidro)

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (5)

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Hi Roomy [Danny Ybarra],

I knew you were with the Public Defenders office, but unaware of the work you are doing with teens. That is great! The population you are working with deserves better. It is good for them to be around someone like yourself (does your wife go with you on your trips to Alaska?) because it helps them to see a whole other world that is fun, safe, and good. I am certain many of the parents of these teens never had a chance to be children themselves and were also neglected or abused. This is a great program (plus your organization) to break that cycle. You are the closest thing to being a parent model for them. I commend you, Danny. About your son, he probably picks up those one-liners from you so don't blame the movies or t.v. Did your application go through yet for funding for the level twelve teens? Glad to hear about Danny and Sammy, too, but my question is, "Can they sing?" Take care, Danny.

Danny and I worked in the Accounting Department at La Paz where he would oftentimes entertain us with songs and jokes. (He truly has a great voice as do the rest of the Ybarra brothers.) For an accounting department, we were pretty lively. Danny, can you remember some of the other people who worked there? I am trying to remember the guy who was a whiz at the adding machine. What about the guy who ate carrots and peanut butter all the time? How did we all end up in an accounting department of all things? Now I am really upset because our absentee roomy (roommate) Bob Aderhold is a financial banker or some such. I should have been in transportation and he should have been in accounting. sin mas, abby/ richgrove/ delano

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/24/04 (6)

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

[Bob Aderhold]And I can attest that you, too, were a real mechanic. The Trejos just took us by storm. They were very charming!.... abby/ richgrove/ delano

Elaine Elinson, 5/24/04

RE: UFW Mechanics

One of the first mechanics (if not the first) was Michael Miller, who was a Conscientious Objector who somehow got approval from his draft board to work for the UFW instead of going to Vietnam. He was at that gas station in Delano (downtown somewhere, not 40 Acres) in 1976-69, and lived over the garage in the back of the house that I shared with Gloria Rodriguez and Dave Perlin. He kept this little black VW bug that I was driving on the road – except for one scary time when I got stuck outside of Wasco in the middle of nowhere, with a broken fuel pump. He went on to become a blacksmith... and later a vet.

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/24/04 (1)

RE: Try to Remember

There was a lot that was not talked during the years I spent with the Union with regards to all the issues people are raising; volunteerism, etc. To tell the truth I don't think they will be talked about in this forum. Some serious folks are taking their best shots. Many kudos to all of them. The level of discussion is a challenge... No matter how I try to think upbeat about some stuff, it still comes back to some pretty serious crap that went on, and lives were affected. It is good to remember, but there's a damn lot to forget. Kathy Murguia

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/24/01 (2)

RE: over the top

Sorry. . . last post was over the top. So much still seems so absurd. So much slipped away so quickly. Kathy m.

Roberto Bustos, 5/25/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

VIVA LOS CAMPESINOS! VIVA LA UNION! VIVA LA CAUSA! VIVA LOS VOLUNTARIOS! VIVA CESAR CHAVEZ!!! ROBERTO BUSTOS 1965-1972. DELANO, COACHELLA, TODO CALIFORNIA, KANSAS CITY KAN.

Kate Colwell, 5/25/04

RE: volunteerism

Ellen:

I applaud your approach. Since I also loved Cesar and am very aware that having known him has permanently influenced my life.... I have felt trepidation about this discussion. I too was very lucky in that I left before the bad times began in 77 so I can remember him as a truly remarkable man who was quite human. I have always been amazed at how strongly some people react to his flaws and errors, expecting perfection of him, but I do understand that those that were hurt the worst have strong reactions.

Watching this conversation evolve, I tense up when it seems that someone needs to prove a point rather than listen and talk to each other about a lot of different experiences. I have worked in a lot of different places in my life and none of them were perfect. I remain endlessly grateful that in the formative years of my young adulthood I got to work with so many wonderful people who cared so much about social justice and changing the world. I see your names and I feel grateful for the chance to share that diverse thoughts and experiences and struggle together to understand the Union.

Kate Colwell

(LA Boycott 73-74, Delano, Sanger and Calexico clinics, 74-76)

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/25/04

RE: CHATFIELD COMMENTS ON ROTHNER AND GANZ

LEROY CHATFIELD 1963-1973, COMMENTS:

Glenn Rothner writes: *“Regarding your movements need turnover point, during my time on the UFW staff we had the opportunity to solidify election and contract victories and begin to establish the UFW as a functioning trade union.”*

Chatfield comments: We also had the same opportunity, i.e., “begin to establish the UFW as a functioning trade union,” it seems to me, after the 1970 table grape contracts. But now with the benefit of hindsight, I think that we did not have the required level of trade union sophistication, the trained staff to administer the contracts and the detached perspective to build a more positive collective bargaining relationship with the table grape growers – for years we had been fighting these growers tooth and nail and now, on the day after the contracts were signed, we were expected to become their industry partners. (Of course the teamster invasion in Salinas did not help the situation and required the UFW to spend its best leadership in that battle – one not of our own making.)

After the 1970 contracts were signed there was so much negative gossip among the LA boycott staff about how poorly the hiring halls were being managed and how understaffed the UFW was in Delano, that I called Cesar to offer any additional help he might need to make things go smoother. He listened for a second then gave me a very sharp (and annoyed) response. Essentially he said the union did not [need] any assistance from us and if there were any problems he would take care of them. End of conversation.

The UFW had a three year window to transform itself from a “movement” to what Glen calls a “functioning trade union,” and we were unable to do so. Yes, I believe there were mitigating circumstances but I also believe the transition from movement to trade union in such a short period of time may not have been possible even under the best of circumstances. I also doubt that Cesar would have been willing to make such a transition because trained trade union staff would need to be hired and serious money would have to be spent on the infrastructure to administer these state-of-the art collective bargaining agreements. I am not convinced, even today, that Cesar’s primary purpose was to build a trade union. He wanted to build something more than a union, he used to say. What exactly? I am not sure.

Some years ago I heard fourth hand that Cesar threatened to resign from the UFW if the board voted to abandon the volunteer system. Is there any truth to that fourth hand statement?

Marshall Ganz writes: *“I also find your argument puzzling (but, rest assured, not ‘nonsense’) that the growers were too powerful anyway so there’s no point in asking why the union failed. For many years we had the growers on the run, successfully enough that we began to change many things in the day to day lives of farm workers. How did that happen? Why did we succeed where others had failed? And why did it all grind to a halt?”*

Chatfield comments: Let me repeat myself, “I am very hesitant, especially after reading the essay of Mark Sharwood (1976-1982), to draw too many conclusions about all the UFW could have accomplished if only they had done such and such or had done it differently. The reality was - and remains the same today - California’s largest industry does not want ‘unions’ and agribusiness employers hold great sway over workers even when they exercise their secret ballot rights and even when an election is won decisively there is absolutely no assurance that a contract will result.”

I don’t see why my hesitancy to draw too many conclusions after reading Mark Sharwood’s essay is characterized as “no point in asking why the union failed.” Also, I am not sure “failed” is the word I would use. Rather I would pose the question in terms of why did the UFW have as much success as it did in the face of the state’s largest - and most virulent anti-union - industry? And let us write about that success. Surely, in human events, unfulfilled potential cannot be the same as failure, can it?

Marshall Ganz writes: *“The Board had two votes on the volunteer system in the summer of 1978. In the first vote, there was a 5/4 split. Cesar, Dolores, Richard, Pete, and Gilbert voted to take the union to an all volunteer system. Eliseo, Jessica, Mack and I voted to begin moving away from it.”*

Chatfield comments: Some years ago I heard fourth hand that Cesar threatened to resign from the UFW if the board voted to abandon the volunteer system. Is there any truth to that fourth hand statement?

Marc Coleman, 5/25/04

RE: volunteerism

Thank you Kate. Your post eloquently expresses my overall feelings as well. The differences of opinion and perspective are also stimulating and worthwhile. I for one hope they continue in the same candid and thoughtful manner.

Marc Coleman (75-77, La Paz, Delano)

Ellen Eggers, 5/25/05 (1)

RE: CHATFIELD COMMENTS ON ROTHNER AND GANZ

From Ellen Eggers (boycott and legal) - I have to say, this discussion is absolutely fascinating and I encourage those of you who were in on these conversations, meetings, etc., to jump in. As a staff person, for many years, I often wondered about these questions, but normally did not have time or opportunity to discuss them at length with folks like LeRoy, Marshall, Cesar or others who were really leading the charge. This is very satisfying for me to be part of this discussion; finally, even though it's too late to change the past, it certainly is instructive.

Jackie (Brown) Davis, 5/25/04

RE: CHATFIELD COMMENTS ON ROTHNER AND GANZ

LeRoy wrote: *Surely, in human events, unfulfilled potential cannot be the same as failure, can it?*

Thank you, LeRoy for posing that question to us. I think that many people have begun to address that in their posts when they write about the incredible and effective work that we have continued with in our lives because of our commitment, exposure to great people/ thoughts, and the tools (Fred Ross) to get things done. It all depends on the specific definitions that we use for success and failure.

Who was it that taught us about the bucket of colored balls thrown against a white wall?? We all focus on different colors and see different experiences, but they all are part of the whole.

In my opinion, the "truth" of our experiences is being expressed here and it is the *collective evaluation* that tells the whole story. We did not create an effective trade union, but we did raise a consciousness in society about farm labor issues and people, we were all expanded due to our time with Cesar, et al., and we continued to make waves in the world in different ways to move toward a vision of justice for those who are disenfranchised.

Jackie Davis

Ellen Eggers, 5/25/04 (2)

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Hey, Karen ... I don't know you, but let me say that I do "feel your pain," as they say. Boy the union really ran rough-shod over a lot of folks. I managed to escape it personally, but I see now that it was really probably just the luck of the draw. Let me apologize on behalf of only myself.... But nonetheless you and others deserve it. Ellen Eggers (La Paz and Boycott 72-87)

Gary Brown, 5/25/04

Dear All:

One of my first contributions was to comment on how the Union could let go its boycott division. I have come to a sense in reading everyone's comments and recalling a couple of personal experiences that there appeared to be a distrust of those outside La Paz. Cesar commented that one reason of leaving Delano was of the infighting and squabbling. At the time that appeared to

me to be justified. Some distance would shield the hierarchy from the day to day. In the San Ysidro strike Cesar lent support to the strike but was annoyed of its wildcat nature and eventually as the strike went on it was clear to me that Margo Cowan who ran the strike had lost favor, if only because the strike was a distraction and support was withdrawn. Cesar also interfered, when in support of that strike it appeared that someone was speaking on behalf of the Union, when the truth was something else. At times it appeared to be only a need to speak with one voice. LeRoys comments about the Union not needing boycotters assistance, makes it seem that the boycotters were outsiders. There have been other comments as well along these lines.

Did Cesar need to isolate himself somewhat in order to operate? Did his isolation lead to mistrust?

I agree that Cesar did not want to build a traditional trade union. He said as much on several occasions in community meetings in La Paz. I often felt he said things in La Paz he did not say elsewhere. It's what made it so inspiring to work for the Union. I believed we were building something different. I guess if that was true then it adds to my questions above. Was Cesar more trustful to those immediately surrounding him?

As I recall the Union was pretty strapped after the grape contracts. To me it is a wonder it did that as well as manage union field offices. I go back to my premise of before salary or volunteer, inexperience or trained. I do not see this as being the major cause of the Unions failure to evolve. It was losing its volunteers and workers and the ability to attract more to replace those leaving?

Regarding failure. As Marshall said if the primary goal was to build a national union for farm workers. The Union failed. We must admit that. If it helps to suggest that there were other successes, and I believe there were, fine, or that the job is unfinished, fine. I do not view Cesar's legacy as a failure for so many reasons but it does not ease my burden nor sooth my hurt that there does not now exist the Union that was of so much promise thirty years ago.

May I point out one thing? I left full time work in 1974. All my experiences were wonderful. No purges, no game, no intrigue. I left with only wonderful memories of Cesar, LeRoy, the Union. But I want to know what happened.

Gary Brown

Andy Imutan, 5/25/04

RE: Just a thought!

Dear Brothers and sisters,

I think the reason why the strike and the grape boycott were so successful and we had the powerful growers on the run was because we truly believed in our cause and we were willing to give our lives for it. We were not there for a summer fling only, just because we had nothing else better to do, we were there fully committed to winning the fight, no matter what it took. We had only one cause and we dedicated ourselves to it with all our heart and soul. Those eight years of my life were the most glorious years for me. The union gave me a better perspective of the real world. That some should sacrifice in order that others could better themselves.

We were successful in our fight with the growers because we never let go once we had them by the throat. We defeated them because multitude of people over the land believed us when we told them our story and they supported us in every way they could.

We did not squabble for salaries or stipends. We did not have the luxury of time for that nor did we care, because all that occupied our mind was to win and we worked our butts off to accomplish that.

Everyone was totally committed to the cause. I am very glad I have given a part of me to that struggle. I am sure that all of us who were there in the early beginning share the same feelings and thoughts that I have.

We beat the growers when we were nothing and we could have beaten them all the way if we were able to maintain the same drive and enthusiasm we shared during the Delano table grape strike and boycott.

Andy Imutan 1965-1973. Delano, Coachella, Baltimore/ Washington, D.C., New York, Delano, Stockton, Delano.

Mary Sheehan, 5/25/04

RE: Just a thought!

Thank you, Andy, for so eloquently stating certainly some of the thoughts I have, and I'm sure for many other people who may not have weighed in on the discussion up to now.

My best and kindest wishes to you all,

Mary Sheehan, 1971-1975; Denver boycott, La Paz, Arizona, Coachella

Jose Gomez, 5/25/04

RE: Volunteer vs. Paid Staff

Some recollections and thoughts on union volunteer vs. paid staff...

Just as I do not think that Peace Corps volunteers should receive a salary, I reject the notion expressed here by some that the UFW volunteer work force should be converted into a salaried work force. The rewards we sought as volunteers were not pecuniary. Our main objective was to fight for social justice, and our main reward was the satisfaction of giving ourselves (our talents, our time, our brains and our brawn, and our blood, sweat and tears) to the workers who were suffering the greatest injustices. Those of us who had been farm workers readily identified with what Cesar, Dolores, Jim Drake and others were doing and eagerly joined La Causa. Those who had not been farm workers nonetheless had a strong commitment to social justice with roots elsewhere, and for various reasons-- religious, political, social, or personal--just as eagerly joined in.

Please note that I am not saying that the Union should not have had, or should not now have, a paid work force. Further reference to my Peace Corps analogy is in order. The Peace Corps has paid staff; it could not maintain long-term stability without it. However, the major difference between the Peace Corps and the UFW was that the Peace Corps from the very beginning was funded by the Congress. The UFW had to start from scratch and build its own economic and political base. This meant that, unlike the Peace Corps, the UFW initially and for a long time could not have had a paid staff. It had to rely on volunteers for everything, but that was also our greatest strength. The sense that we all -- from Cesar on down -- were sacrificing for the farm workers made us equal comrades in the struggle. Eschewing material compensation meant that the greatest rewards went to those who worked the hardest. These were psychic rewards that no material wealth can begin to replace.

It is also true that Cesar was very pragmatic. As the union grew, its needs grew. In many conversations I had with him, I know that he was not at all happy that he had had to start paying the lawyers a retainer fee. Of course, he knew that the day would come when it would be not only necessary but also appropriate for the union to have paid staff, but the demands of the lawyers came much sooner than he would have preferred. He was right to believe that paying the lawyers threatened to undermine the egalitarianism and idealism that fueled the collaboration, energy, morale and determination of the volunteers that the union still depended on. Once the cat was out of the bag, however, Cesar became more open to making exceptions, particularly if fairness dictated it. If he went out of his way to recruit staff with unique technical skills (the mechanics, for example), he kept open the option of paying them a modest stipend, particularly if they were former farm workers.

I left the union at the end of 1974, but I heard about the lawyers' further demands for material compensation. I also knew the further problem that giving in to this demand would create for the union at that time. When I was serving as Cesar's assistant, particularly during the difficult

summer of 1973, my morale took a serious plunge when a particular volunteer in the Legal Department (whom I shall not name) started receiving \$400 a month upon passing the bar exam (I had not yet gone to law school, so this was not an option for me). I was working 18-hour days, seven days a week, doing as important work as anyone in the Legal Department. My resentment came not from having material remuneration beyond my reach, but rather from the implicit message that my work was not valued as much. Cesar was painfully aware of the contradictions and dilemmas that came with the compromising of an altruistic volunteer system built on psychic rewards.

I would be a hypocrite if I did not also confess here that for a few months at the end of my tenure as Cesar's assistant I, too, received a \$400 per month stipend -- through the NFWM. I'm sure that some of you who served with me at La Paz will resent that. See how erosive it is to mix two very different reward systems for staff similarly situated? While the union was still dependent on volunteers who thrived on psychic pay, the premature introduction of material reward (however inadequate) proved to be cancerous. Why did I ask for and take the money? Partly to regain my morale, I suppose, but also out of a serious personal financial need that suddenly came up and that otherwise would have forced me to leave the union before I did. Cesar's pragmatism and sense of fairness led him to make arrangements with the NFWM to pay me. His pragmatism told him that taking care of my financial problem was preferable to losing me. His sense of fairness saw the contradiction between my situation and that of the paralegal-turned-lawyer I refer to above. We talked about that, and he talked me into staying longer than I otherwise would have.

In my view, a volunteer force of some kind should be a permanent fixture of the union. Even in today's world there are idealistic young people (my students among them) who are yearning to give a couple of years of their lives to work for a cause. But I do agree that at some point the union should have developed a permanent, paid staff to carry on the long-term work of the union. What I disagree with, and I believe Cesar disagreed with, is the idea that the volunteer staff per se should have been converted into paid staff. Of course, many who had served as volunteers were prime candidates for permanent positions that would become salaried at the appropriate time.

If I had been at La Paz when the proposal was made to convert the volunteer staff to a salaried staff, I would have opposed it. What I would have supported was a plan to phase in paid staff at the appropriate time to ensure long-term administrative stability while maintaining a strong volunteer force. The duties and expectations of salaried staff and volunteers would be clearly delineated and distinguished. Anyone, including volunteers, could compete for the permanent positions. This would have removed the ambiguities, inconsistencies and contradictions in a system where individuals are picked on an ad hoc basis to move from volunteer to paid status.

Jose Gomez

Portland, NJ, NY, DC Boycotts (1970-1972); La Paz (1972-1975)

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/25/04 (1)

RE: Volunteer vs. Paid Staff

[Jose Gomez writes:

[Some recollections and thoughts on union volunteer vs. paid staff..

[Just as I do not think that Peace Corps volunteers should receive a salary, I reject the notion expressed here by some that the UFW volunteer work force should be converted into a salaried work force. The rewards we sought as volunteers were not pecuniary. Our main objective was to fight for social justice, and our main reward was the satisfaction of giving ourselves (our talents, our time, our brains and our brawn, and our blood, sweat and tears) to the workers who were suffering the greatest injustices. Those of us who had been farm workers readily identified with what Cesar, Dolores, Jim Drake and others were doing and eagerly joined La Causa. Those who had not been farm workers nonetheless had a strong commitment to social justice with roots elsewhere, and for various reasons-- religious, political, social, or personal--just as eagerly joined in.]

Amen!

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/25/04 (1)

RE: Volunteerism vs. paid staff

When I came to the Union in "65" the issue of paid staff emerged as we worked side by side with some AWOOC staff and then later with outside organizers from other unions, eg. AFL-CIO organizers/ Seafarers etc. The important thing was having food, shelter, transportation etc. needs taken care of. During the early days, when strikers came out and joined the picket lines, the question as what bills were paid etc. When the NFWA came into some funds it was always an issue. After all idealism can't feed your kids and put a roof over your family's head. Workers were practical. Even back in the early days of the strike, who got what was political. It did become a way of controlling who stayed involved. There were at times promises were made and later broken as far as bill paying. Some strikers lost their homes. The first strikers were part of the volunteer force that gave UFWOC a national presence and later the UFW, along with the boycott a power to be reckoned with in terms of negotiating strength. The goals were contracts and the development of a unionized labor force.

For two years I was a \$5 a week, go where you need me, do what you tell me, and my time was the Union's time volunteer. It was nice to have paid side kicks, who had their own lives apart from the world of the volunteers. When I met Lupe, he was a practical man. As a farmworker and he understood the basics of meeting his financial needs. Until they were met by the NFWM, while he supported La Causa he clearly chose to meet his financial obligations to his family by working. Unlike the much politicking that went on, he wanted to organize. His vision I feel was clear. He believed in the need for workers to have a union and he was ready to go where he was told, work 18 hrs days as long as his family's needs were met. I think this was true for all of us as we grew up in the Union.

Yes, the Ministry paid him a stipend, and it did give him the dignity of controlling the paying of his bills, and not have to rely on whether someone decided that he didn't deserve to have \$ sent to his dependent mother in Mexico. But this gave him a chance to maintain his commitment to working for what he believed in, which was no less than the inspired idealism of those who have voiced their thoughts here. What is important to consider is that those who made the decisions in these areas of controlling the economics of the volunteers' lives had other resources that were not directly economic, but supportive nonetheless. The argument of volunteerism vs. salaried staff was in part a ruse to deal with the politics of something else, which had to do with the Founder's vision.

I think what is important is to recall that economics, who's bills were paid and who received what in terms of the later grants was a matter of politics.. internal union politics and practical technical/professional needs. It was also a source of pressure if one had fallen from favor. In the end it was a way of controlling the volunteer labor force. It was a convoluted business and it had been since the beginning of the movement. There was a chance to clean it up in the period many are discussing. I don't believe we had the financial management and the informational systems capacity to respond to the question of converting a selected volunteer staff to a rational system of paid staff.. There were only the grants which became a source of friction for La Paz staff. Cesar was on the defensive at that point and I believe held onto what he understood best.. sacrifice.

We all have our stories of the way it was when we had to create something out of nothing, and what we did to survive. Living on a stage, nursing while driving and operating a bullhorn etc. As a volunteer the war stories are many. And it was these stories and their effects which allowed the union to "take off".

Kate Colwell, 5/25/04

RE: Two questions

Questions:

* * * *

Today I found a 1972 reprint of a talk by Cesar about money, reprinted then by NFWM. Anyone interested if I'm able to scan?

Kate Colwell
(LA Boycott 73-74, Delano, Sanger and Calexico clinics 74-76)

Bob Aderhold, 5/25/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Great to hear from you Marc! I'm doing great. Saw your response to Carlos' ice breaker. Regards to Shelley!

I needed that memory jog - yeah, now I recall we were paid for a while through an OIC program, but I think it was fairly brief episode. Hey, remember Jose, one of our novices? I don't recall his last name but do remember he was from Tangancicuaro, Michoacan!

Here's my \$0.02 on volunteer staff. I essentially agree with most everybody else that a minimally compensated workforce only works in the short run and that, ultimately, a union, like any other organization, needs to have a competitively paid staff and be run by paid professionals. One other thing to remember about our volunteer pay, the \$5 was also subsidized by the taxpayer who picked up the cost of food stamps for many if not most of us.

Bob Aderhold 1973-1978

Kathie Olguin Smoot, 5/25/04

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Kern County would not give V & me food stamps because he was not "gainfully employed."

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/25/04 (2)

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

When I was in Delano (1970 -1973), Kern County didn't even have a food stamp program. The growers wouldn't allow it. Instead, we had the processed cheese, canned chicken, powdered milk, and other staples provided by the USDA, that always seemed to be available right before and during the first part of the harvest, but always seemed to disappear at the end of the season. The only exception I can remember is when there was a railroad strike, which slowed down the harvest tremendously. So they kept the food coming to keep the workers in the valley a little longer. I think that strike was in 1971 or 1972.

Emmy Bell Cardiel (Lopez), 5/25/04

RE: over the top

Hi Kathy!!!!

It's me Emmy (Cynthia Bell's daughter) . I was your adopted daughter there for awhile - I would come over to have lots of slumber sleepovers with Maria (and fight constantly with Ricardo?) That, I would never forget--Short from not having many siblings! (okay not any) it was fun being able to share that experience with you and your family! Never apologize for speaking your mind. I think, Kathy, we all agree with you to a certain degree whether some of us want to admit it or not. Lots of wonderful memories that I wouldn't want to change for nothing in the world - yet some memories that I wish I could forget but can't - because ultimately they changed my life. I don't mean to offend those who have given less than 15 years, that is not my intent here, but for those of us that have been with the union over 15years or more I'm sure had a different view. My view, for one, was that I didn't look at this as a job- as an experience-or as an opportunity. It was my life, until I was turned down to continue on to college after high (I graduated in 1986). I remember when Tina Mondragon had brought counselors from USC Bakersfield to help us our grants and applications to help further our education (we were excited!) And that was the last time I saw any one of them again. Rumors had run ramped amongst us that Cesar had called in Tina to his office

and told her never to call those people again, because if the "children" of the union start leaving La Paz, then who was going to continue running the union. Maybe he had a reason? Maybe he was upset because we didn't ask him first? But where were the rules written for us to abide by? Instead we were disrespected. But this wouldn't be the only time I was disrespected. So see Kathy, you weren't the only one affected. Wishing you better memories. Love Emmy

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/25/04 (2)

RE: over the top

HI... respected EMMY! We had some good times. Yes, you were family, and Ricardo ...well I remember a very interesting birthday present from you that he wasn't sure about and finally figured out with the help of his Dad. Yes, Emmy, there were those painful times. Joaquin never completed his semester at Bakersfield College for somewhat the same reasons. He did go on to work with Sister Florence and gained some valuable experience...but today in his field he would have benefited from a degree.. I was so glad to read that you have married and have family. Your Mom sounds so happy. Maria had a difficult time for a while. She almost died from meningitis and had a difficult time in her recovery. She's a tiger now and doing well, married with Michael who is African American with a charm of his own and together they have a child named Xavier. Our children, Lupe and mine, and you did carry on...but in a way never expected by CC. There is his family and the foundations etc., but the kids of the movement have really branched out to vistas beyond. You carry the vision and have transformed it for your generation. You have the faith and your children carry the future Emmy. So good to hear from you. My best to your Mom. Love from all of us. The Murguias: Ana, Delores, Joaquin and Ricardo, Maria, Mundo, Benito, and Salvador.

Tom Dalzell, 5/26/04

RE: Volunteer System

Leroy asks if it is true that Cesar threatened to quit in 1978 if the Union moved away from the volunteer system. I was not at that Board meeting, but I know that the minutes of the meeting show exactly that - Cesar telling the Board before the vote was taken that he would quit if he lost the vote.

I am not sure what we are debating at this point.

We know that the Union was never all-volunteer. The scope of the non-volunteer element may have been greater than what we thought, but we all knew that there were some who were paid more than the volunteer level. We all agree, it seems, that the mostly-volunteer system was very important and very good for many years. I think that we all agree that for the boycott-based years or the movement years, it was a good idea.

We know that at some point the Union started paying all staff. It seems that for some positions the pay is still less than what you would find in most unions, while with others the pay is competitive.

So is it possible that all we are debating is whether the change should have happened sooner?

Tom Dalzell

Mary Mecartney, 5/26/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

I've been focusing on the vegetable industry based in Monterey County, especially D' Arrigo who now employs over 1,200 harvesting workers and has not negotiated a contract with the UFW since the September 8, 1975, ALRB election. (D' Arrigo is one of the few companies left in the industry that does its own growing/harvesting/shipping and did not undergo the labyrinth of corporate restructuring most of the large companies did in the 1980's to undermine the union.). I'm currently working on projects beyond the contract campaign that includes learning about land and water issues/ politics that impact the viability of ag in addition to assisting with the development of basic training materials for contract administration and negotiations. (My expectation is that when we

get the contract with D' Arrigo, we will be prepared to develop a productive relationship for all parties and there will not be major problems renegotiating the contract.) The basic training materials are geared to both staff and worker leadership (plus supplemental materials for those who like to read.)

I thank those long ago volunteers who typed out "Preparing Workers for Negotiations and Contract Administration" (which has examples from 1965 and 1966), "Building the Winning Boycott" (Fred Ross, 1974 house meeting training), "Trainers Manual" prepared for the Jan 1975 house meeting training in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in addition to the more detailed "how to" manuals for ULPs, RCs, RDs, the AOM project etc. etc.

Also thanks to LeRoy for the documentation project. I am fascinated by history and what it can teach us. (e.g. an effective approach/ tradition consistent through the essays was the simplicity and focus of the action program that allowed for a lot of creativity in the implementation.) in addition to finding out more about the origins and subsequent developments over the years.

I hope to be able to contribute and question more after I finished this project. Driving from work yesterday I mentally drafted comments about having 2 children and raising them with the support of the La Paz community in the 1980s.

Mary L. Macartney
Dec. 1974-1993 and continuing

Nancy Grimley Carleton, 5/26/04

RE: Everyone Can Do This

Nancy Carleton
Boycott Staff, 1975-1976 (mostly out of San Jose with two months in the San Fernando Valley)

I left the union following the defeat of Proposition 14 in November 1976 in a state of physical and emotional burnout. * * * *

* * * *

Looking back, I recognize I learned some powerful organizing tools while working for the UFW, but I also learned some unhealthy habits. When I was working as a full-time volunteer, what the union practiced, at least as far as the boycott staff went, while effective, was also what I have come to call "burn-out organizing." These days, I find myself extremely interested in how those of us who are devoted to social change can learn "organizing for the long haul." To my mind, that includes finding ways to stay balanced and nurture our bodies and souls rather than simply throwing ourselves into constant "crisis" pushes (I'm sure I'm not the only one who heard the phrase "this is the most important time in the history of the union" as justification for superhuman efforts).

Thanks, LeRoy, for setting up this forum where each of us can speak our truth. The heart of nonviolence is a willingness to cling to the truth, as Gandhi put it, and Gandhi's use of the term satyagraha, or truth force, for nonviolence is worth remembering. I deeply believe that the path to peace, whether on a personal level or on a social/political level, arises from a process of seeking truth and speaking truth and acting out of our commitment to the truth, while recognizing both its subjective and its universal elements. This, too, is an ongoing practice. May we practice peace in this moment by keeping our hearts open with compassion while we listen to one another.

Gary Brown, 5/26/04

RE: Volunteer System

Indeed. We know Cesar wanted the volunteer staff. Still and I have asked this question before. The loss of volunteers seemed to have preceded decisions concerning pay. Leroy mentioned the drop off after 1975. What was the thought process at the top as they saw dwindling numbers of volunteers or those seeking paid positions? Was there any concern? Was there any plan to keep the boycott open, the volunteers coming?

Gary Brown

Daneen Montoya, 5/26/04

RE: La Paz kids and other thoughts – email to LeRoy

LeRoy suggested sending the following to everybody.... So here goes.

LeRoy,

I just read your e-mail re comments on Glenn Rothner, Sharwood, Ganz, et.al. e-mails. I want to thank you for stating that we should ask "*why did the UFW have as much success as it did in the face of the state's largest – and most virulent anti-union - industry?*"

I keep reading comments about UFW's failure. Indeed, we didn't fulfill all of our hopes and expectations, many of us endured extreme physical and mental hardships and unfair, petty events...and I don't mean in any way to discount any of them. I am reminded, however, of the old Bobby Kennedy quote to the effect

(and I paraphrase very liberally) about our efforts being like a pebble thrown in a lake and creating concentric circles that continue to expand throughout the universe. That's not the exact quote, but it does speak to the fact that no matter how large or small a contribution each of us made, those contributions eventually did merge with one another and did create changes in our lives, the lives of farmworkers, growers, and all those our efforts touched and continue to touch.

I want to speak especially about our kids who grew up in the UFW. They may have been from "poor/ disadvantaged" families from some viewpoints, but they were so politically hip, well informed and everything but "disadvantaged"... I think they learned by osmosis...hanging around our meetings, participating in marches, strike and boycott activities, and listening to the volunteers and visitors...who came from all over the world! Each and every one of them have grown into productive, caring, knowledgeable human beings and these are our hope and our gift to the world.

Not one of them is.. .nor are any of us.. .any longer satisfied with the status quo. They question everything!!! ... it wouldn't occur to any of them to lay down and be the doormats we who grew up in the '50s became for a time. I remember Matthew Drake, in (4th grade?) at the Tehachapi school refusing to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance because, as he told the teacher, he didn't feel he could do that until "all my black and brown brothers and sisters are free!"

I remember the Murguia kids, my kids, the Drake, Anzaldua and Esparza kids (and others whose names escape me)...all attending the Tehachapi grade school coming to the handful of us parents and other volunteers living at La Paz that first year and asking for a meeting in the Administration building meeting hall...which they organized and set the agenda...the issue? They had become painfully aware that kids who paid for their school lunches were getting hot lunches and the kids who were subsidized by the "free lunch program" were getting cold box lunches. They KNEW this was a violation of the conditions of the school district receiving government funds for the school lunch program...and they wanted to protest!

They asked us to get them to the school board meeting...and, they emphasized, not to speak for them...they would do it themselves...they just wanted to know we would be there to support them. These kids presented their argument to the School Board ... AND WON!! ...and from that day forward ALL kids in Kern County received hot lunches!

Our kids are adults now, with kids of their own and the legacy of our hopes and dreams for the UFW lives on in them...the movement a failure??? I think not! Look at how many of them ...and us... continue to fight the good battle in this and other arenas some thirty years from that small beginning in the 1960s.

I would hope not to discount anything brought up in these discussions. I find the dialogue engendered by the Documentation Project (I have nothing but praise for you starting this ball rolling, LeRoy) truly amazing. Questions are being answered and things discussed that many of us have been afraid to bring up; it has allowed venting of feelings, brought back memories long buried, and affords discussion of things we thought we could never talk about. My hope is that this

open forum continues ... the dialogue can be (and is) as informative as the documentation project itself...an unexpected dividend to your wonderful idea.

Just look at all the lives we have touched and those who have touched us. Things will never be the same again... Life seldom turns out the way we plan, and I've come to realize we have a great deal to be proud of ... and the struggle continues!

Daneen Montoya
1968 – 1972/'73

Larry Frank, 5/26/04

RE: Volunteerism v. Staff Salaries

Hi folks –

My first entry.

The connection that I am waiting for people to explore on this staff salary/ volunteer issue is how it played out with the Ranch Committee presidents in the following years. From what I understand, the elected Ranch Committee presidents who received their regular worker salary to represent the union in the lettuce contracts were the first union staff to receive an actual wage, albeit from the company (not the volunteer or stipend people have been talking about). Some feel that this structure was the closest that the union came to institutionalizing itself and building a base from which to grow.

I'll leave it up to others to tell the story of what happened to the Ranch Committee presidents and those contracts and/or to comment on that period since I only heard it second-hand.

But I am interested in how that structure was allowed to develop in the context that is being discussed. And how the dynamics that are being discussed played into the situation that followed.

Larry Frank
L.A. Boycott 1977-78

Long p.s.

I am from a later period than many of you. To fill in a couple details, I came from an August 1976 strike in Colorado at a canning factory, having gone with several other strikers to the UFW office in Denver, only to find it vacant except for the poster with a phone number and the offer of \$5 a week, room & board. When I started in February 1977 in Los Angeles, we were making \$10/ week, room & board. I lived at the Harvard House until the boycott was closed down on Cinco de Mayo of 1978. * * * *

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/26/04 (1)

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

Barbara. You're right! The USDA commodities were also available after harvest for your neighbors to the north in Tulare County. While my father refused to apply for welfare, he did bring home commodities. I'm sure glad we canned during the summer. What purpose did the little recipe sheets serve that were inserted into the food boxes? We just cooked everything our way and poured chili over it. To this day, I refuse to eat chicken from a can, powdered milk, white beans, and am always suspect of cornmeal because it may be crawling with bugs.

Those, of course, were the days before "unemployment insurance" that farm workers collect today ... now who can we thank for that? abby/ richgrove/ delano

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/26/04 (2)

RE: volunteer/ paid stipend discussion

Daneen said, "As we know, I lost the bet, and Cesar finally "organized" Helen and the family to move to La Paz. Lots and lots of people moved to La Paz and things changed forever."

Hi Daneen. Yes, Helen does have horrible memories of the old TB Hospital (now La Paz). Actually, she was made to eat onions, which she hated and threw-up, then forced to eat her own vomit by one of the nurses at the hospital. (I remember telling Sister Florence, who was one of the most professional nurses I have ever met. about why Helen didn't eat onions. She almost fell off her chair and it was the only time I ever heard her speak louder than her normal twenty-five to thirty-five decibels.) To this day Helen does not eat onions. I recall Marcos Lopez (UFW Attorney/ La Paz) once telling us there is documentation of the sanitarium during those years and how Mexican children were literally picked up from the streets up and down the San Joaquin Valley to be brought there just to fill patient quotas in order to receive government money to continue operating the hospital. What a ruse! What abuse! Bring them healthy and let them get contaminated from those who are truly ill and no one will be the wiser. What is one less little Mexican kid anyway? Poor farm worker parents had no say plus many barely spoke English. Helen's younger sister, Petra, was also brought there. It was Helen's older sister, Teresa, who finally came and fought to get them out according to Helen when I asked her. She raised holy hell to be exact. If you knew her, you could believe it! One time when Helen and I were at the North Unit (the children's ward) preparing for some event or other, she called me to a section of windows and pointed to the floor to the exact spot where her bed had been. She shared stories of some of her young friends. A little girl she knew from Delano (one of the Gil's from Delano; I knew her daughter from school) would cry uncontrollably every night and hide under the bed whenever she heard the coyotes howling at a distance. She would shake until she would finally cry herself to sleep. Helen looked so sad to me that day, I almost cried. My heart went out to her then to all those poor little children so far from home and from their mothers. The decision to move could not have come easy for her. I went with her to La Paz when Cesar was trying to convince her to live there. He planned a Credit Union meeting there so she was forced to go. Cesar was so sweet and attentive to her all the while we were there because she was so nervous. He knew how much she had suffered there, the courage she displayed just to be there and the memories that were coming back to her as we walked through the hospital wings. She spoke of some of them. From what I could tell, Helen still hated it there, but Cesar was gentle and understanding telling her over and over all the good things she could expect if they lived there. I really do not know what finally convinced her to move. I believe I went there twice with her that year (1970). I remember how cozy Kathy Murguia's home was and that always stayed with me. When I was told to move the Credit Union to La Paz in 1975, I was already sold on the idea because of the good feelings I got having visited her home. The one place Helen had dreaded to move to, I looked forward to moving to with great anticipation. I loved La Paz and the weather when I lived there. But, I found out later, much later, that I was extremely allergic to probably every tree in the compound. abby/ richgrove/ delano/ credit union

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/26/04 (3)

RE: the volunteer staff: romantic dream?

[Kathie Olguin Smoot wrote: *Kern County would not give V & me food stamps because he was not "gainfully employed".*]

That is as bad as me having a difficult time getting financial aid to attend college (1971) because I couldn't produce copies of my father's income tax forms. I could not get that city counselor to understand that, 1. We were a large family so therefore my dad didn't have to bother (no nice little credits in those days), 2. Growers never asked about deductions, my dad never received a W2 from any of them, and his Social Security was never reported to the SS Admin. and, 3. He went on strike so he would not have had to file anyway. That one was the hardest for the counselor to swallow. It wasn't until I went to work (while attending school) that I was able to later show my own tax papers to get financial aid; that plus a wonderful letter of recommendation from Chris Hartmire. abby/

Daneen Montoya, 5/26/04

RE: UFW Mechanics – a bit of trivia

A bit of trivia...

Does anyone remember Joe Bithel who worked at the 40 Acres gas station in the early 1970s? * *
* *

Question: Is anyone in contact with Gloria (Soto) Naranjo – who worked in the service center at 40 Acres in the early 1970s and who ran the San Ysidro Service Center after that? I would very much like to be in contact with Gloria, who was my best friend when I was with the Union. With both of us moving several times, we have lost touch.

Thanks!

Daneen Montoya
1968 – 1972/ 73

Hope Lopez, 5/26/04

RE: SNIPS AND SNAILS

AND PUPPY DOG TAILS. I gather by the list 'time to vent' that the UFW began and ended @ La Paz after the year 1975.

I am working, still, on my Chavista Daze of my time with the union. I believe they are called memoirs. I like to think of my writings as anecdotes, such as those unforgettable times when Doug Adair used to sit on the toilet @ our Boycott house in Philadelphia and wave @ me.

I worked with thousands of volunteers, farm worker, students and adults. I'm writing about unpaid and \$5 dollar a week volunteers. I'm sure they still exist.

As a matter of fact I'm referring to my writings as "VOLUNTEERS, REBEL ROUSERS AND BLEEDING HEARTS - **The Feeble Strength of One.**"

I'm sure that all of you have great humorous anecdotes to contribute to the project, anecdotes that made your day during your rebel rousing years with the farm workers.

Doug, I sincerely hope that you have not lost your sense of humor; you made my life worth living in Philadelphia. Your personality was enough to turn little old ladies off grapes.

Hope F. Lopez – 1966-1974 – Chavista de hueso colorado.

Cynthia Bell, 5/26/04

RE: Abby "I accept your invitation"

Hola Abby,

Long time no see, I'm glad to know you and George are doing well y toda tu familia. I want you to know that ever since these wonderful conversation have taken place I have become "Sleepless in Seattle", I talk to Emmy almost every day and I tell her stories and you are right I should share some. I also want to say that I agree with Kathy Murguia some are very painful but I will start with some fun memories.

You and Daneen touched upon some of my good and fun memories of la Paz. And yes you are correct on Helen's account of La Paz she shared some of these memories with me while we worked in the Credit Union in Delano. I also remember how she would always try to find the perfect man for me. (bless her heart) I will always love her for being herself. And what a wonderful mother she is.

LA PAZ

1969 I was in Coachella working in the office during the strike and I remember Cesar coming in the office with a plan, he wanted to have a 24 hours picket line at the Giumarra Vineyards in Bakersfield, I don't recall if he needed more volunteers or this was a new project. The next thing I remember I and others were on our way to La Paz., those that I remember Richard Ybarra, Roy Rocha I think Richard's friend or cousin Squirrel Roy Valdez (El Indio) and a few others. Once we got to la Paz, it was a ghost town the only people living there was Kathy and Lupe Murguia and I think little Ricardo. Kathy assigned us our rooms and the following day she introduced us to

the kitchen, we all took turns in cooking and preparing our lunches that we took with us for that day (Kathy do you remember?) I remember I could not sleep because of the train what an awful noise, but I got use to it, or maybe because after long hours at the picket lines I was just dog-tired.

THE REVOLT

I remember us being at the picket-line in front of Giumarra with red flags Hulega! and eating sandwiches every single day those were long, long hot days and if memory serves me right Richard Ybarra started to mobilize us to complain about the food it got so bad that Manuel Chavez, came up to La Paz to see what he can do we had a meeting (what can I say we were just plain hungry) next we were all having a wonderful meal of steaks Viva la Revolution!

THE CARAVAN

We had a routine of driving up to Tehachapi to fill up our cars with gas since we only had one credit card this would happen several times a week. One day we were one driver short so I volunteered (I had no license and I barely knew how to drive) I drove the Gua-Gua (a old panel van) off we go I was so happy to be driving that I didn't realize that I was speeding I was pulled over by the highway patrol, of course every one pulled up behind me in solidarity, the officer looked back and saw several cars parked and he proceeded to write me up, then he walked towards each parked car and gave them all tickets for one reason or another (no signal lights, no tags and so on) get the picture. After all was said and done we continued towards Tehachapi, what started as a field trip ended in a funeral procession needless to say they were all mad at me for a couple of days.

THE PIANO

Richard (again) and Squirrel found a piano in the basement at the hospital they brought it up and started to play for us, then I think it was Kathy or Lupe that told us we needed permission to use the piano so back down to the basement it went. The following day the PIANO was brought back up, I never knew who did it but I can only guess.

July 1970

Our stay at La Paz came to an end. Cesar came up to tell us that a contract settlement had been reached and that we are invited for the big contract signing an historical event at the 40 acres, I was young at that time 19, I did not realized what I was about to witness until much later. Cesar thanked us for our long and hard hours in front of Giumarra and pretty much gave us a good-by speech but wait, he said that he needed full-time volunteers and that he would call out our names and that he hoped we would accept he called out Richard's, Roy's and mine (after my name I don't remember the rest- sorry I was too excited). I think it was that same day or the following I was in the station wagon with Roberto Garcia driving, dogs in the back and on my way to Delano, thus the beginning of my story within the movement.

Cynthia Bell
1969-1978/ 1981-1988

Ellen Eggers, 5/26/04

RE: Abby "I accept your invitation"

Cynthia... that was just a wonderful sweet account of your little "birds eye view" of those historic days. I came in 72 and felt like I had missed all of the good days. Thanks for sharing a little of what it was like! What an amazing time that must have been. Ellen

Marshall Ganz, 5/27/04 (1)

RE: *Sorting Some Things Out*

Let's try to sort out a few things.

One way to look at the UFW is in terms of our own experience of it.

At a personal level, for many, their service to the union was a life changing experience of learning, growth, and development. For some, it was also an experience of frustration and disrespect and disappointment and pain. They are both part and parcel of the stories of the people who built the union. And they are both important objects for reflection, learning, and, perhaps, gaining a bit of wisdom about ourselves.

But there is another way to look at it.

Beyond the personal, there is the story of the public life – and contribution - of the UFW. Many experienced it during its periods of growth, creativity and success - at its primary mission of improving the lives of farm workers, as well as its secondary contributions of demanding respect for the Mexican and Mexican-American community (the civil rights aspect of the movement) and of developing many leaders and organizers who went on to serve other causes. Some also experienced the union when it got stuck, lost perspective, retreated from organizing, turned on its own, purged volunteers, board members, and farm workers as it turned into a negative image of what it had been. This was not only a “personal experience” of the union’s (or Cesar’s) “flaws” --- it was a public retreat from the work the union had undertaken on behalf of which it earned respect (and trust) from the public, from those who worked for it, and from those farm workers whom it served. Both of these aspects of the union’s development are also objects for reflection, learning, and analysis – less about ourselves except in the broadest sense, but very much about the practice of leadership, politics, social movements, and efforts to make the world a better place.

I think of the union’s story - and Cesar’s story - as a tragedy precisely because it began so heroically, demonstrated such creativity, carried on with such commitment, and got such results - but then it went into reverse as its flaws - not only Cesar’s - got the better of it, turning the heroic into the cowardly, a shadow of its former self. To fully appreciate its successes - and learn from them - requires appreciating its failures – and learning from them. To do less is to turn the movement and its leaders into one dimensional cartoon cutouts that only trivializes their accomplishments and their failures.

Through it all, though, one point remains very, very clear. The movement was not only the “experience” of its full time “volunteers”, but was also the experience of 1000’s of farm workers who placed great hope in its promise to alter their lives for the better. As Larry Frank reminded us, we go back and forth about how people who worked for the union were compensated, ignoring the farm worker leaders who constituted the UFW in the work force. I had the privilege to work with many of them over my years with the union, especially in Salinas and Imperial Valleys. And while many who served with the UFW as volunteers went on to other lives, communities, and accomplishments, most of the farm worker leaders - especially those caught up in the purges - had no such options.

If I appear to judge the union - or Cesar - harshly, it is because the great opportunities that it afforded many of us does not offset its ultimate failure to accomplish its goal - the goal that had earned its support from volunteers, the public, and farm workers: unionizing California - if not national - agriculture. So while its successes merit real attention - I wrote my dissertation about its early successes - so do its failures if the story is to be understood. Cesar was the leader of a movement, not only an extraordinarily gifted - and flawed - human being. His work - and all of our work - must be evaluated in light of the goals of that movement.

P.S.

Cesar did threaten to resign if the Board did not support his rejection of the lawyer’s request for a salary increase. It was not in the first instance a vote on whether to end the volunteer system, but rather to end the practice of “buying services” as needed (as legal, medical, etc.). In light of this threat, it is remarkable that 4 of 9 board members did not vote with him. Unfortunately, this was not enough to reverse the direction in which he was leading the union.

Re Leroy’s view that the UFW could have turned itself into a “trade union” between 1970 and 1973, but it would have required hiring lots of AFL-CIO staff, I don’t agree. We had plenty of able people in the union – farm workers and non-farm workers alike. What we didn’t grasp was the scale of the challenge we faced in putting a workable field office system in place, providing

the kind of training needed by ranch committees, etc. What we didn't do was pay close attention to what would have been required to make that happen - we were too arrogant, based on the fact we had done something no one else had ever done, we were too arrogant to learn from the experience of others unions and to listen to what the grape workers were telling us.

Leroy, Cesar and I sat around La Paz the winter of 1970-71 trying to figure out what kind of system might work and came up with the debacle of "union seniority" that we tried to enforce on the table grape industry during the 1971 season. It didn't help, of course, that until April of 1971, many of the union's top leaders (Eliseo, Marcos, Jim, and others) were out running boycott cities. When the boycott moratorium came and they began to return to California, the field office operation began to improve. Despite these difficulties - and the fight with the Teamsters and Nixon administration - the union was growing as it expanded into Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and, Florida.

Despite all these challenges, it may have been possible to hold on to many of the grape contracts had we been willing to move to a position on the hiring hall that eventually we moved to anyway.

And despite the fact we lost the contracts, the passage of the ALRA was a "second bite out of the apple" that gave us a whole new lease on life. Sadly, that's when the other problem set in.

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/27/04

RE: *Sorting Some Things Out*

Marshall, would you explain further the "union seniority" debacle. What were the workers from the grapes industry telling the leadership that wasn't heard? The "hiring hall" was problematic. Was it a structural problem or a training/ staffing problem? The "arrogance" you speak of ... was it a question of being overwhelmed, and therefore engaging in a premature retreat. This was also the time La Paz emerged as a refuge for looking at planning and developing strategy. Could you comment on these thoughts/ questions? Kathy Murguia

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/27/04

RE: *Abby "I accept your invitation"*

[Cynthia -] I knew you had it in you. Thanks for filling in some of the spaces in time I had forgotten. Funny you should mention the piano because I always wondered what happened to the piano in the basement. I played it a little when I visited there with Helen. I always thought the piano in the kitchen was another one. Strange that the piano was important to us. Perhaps it symbolized fun- something fun in the midst of our exhausting jobs. It was in the kitchen the whole time I lived at La Paz.

Have you shared with Emmy the wonderful bond you had with the Filipino brothers from the Village? They were so attentive to you and Emmy as well as the rest of the staff. How thoughtful they were. Out of no where, on hot days, showing up with sodas for us or ice cream cones. I enjoyed the coolness of the kitchen at Agbayani. It was built well. Every time I hear a brother has passed on, I feel like I have lost a good friend.

You were at 40 Acres after the contract signing. I remember you were the receptionist for a while in 1970. Didn't you work in the hiring hall, too? It was during that time that I left to return in 1975 to the good 01' Credit Union. /bye sin mas, abby/ richgrove/ delano

Gary Brown, 5/27/04

Marshall, Yes, Kathy asks the same questions I had after reading your comments. Arrogance, really, I think you are too harsh on yourself. Even as a twenty-something I could see the enormous tasks the Union faced after the grape contracts and I was unaware of the problems of transition to implementing the Union contracts.

Yet, if you say you were too arrogant to pay attention to "what it would have make it happen" then would that not include listening to the trade unions and hiring trade union staff as Leroy suggested? I wonder was there a fear of bringing in the management styles of the traditional trade

unions of the 1970's? Was this a fear of the executive board, Cesar? It seemed to me that the Union was about doing something more and perhaps did not want to the professional white collar type union business manager system that so many unions had adopted. Did that have any part in rejecting the professional union staff?

Gary Brown

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/27/04

RE: CHATFIELD COMMENTS – JOSE GOMEZ POSTING

Jose Gomez writes: *"See how erosive it is to mix two very different reward systems for staff similarly situated? While the union was still dependent on volunteers who thrived on psychic pay, the premature introduction of material reward (however inadequate) proved to be cancerous."*

Chatfield comments:

1. Cesar asked me to hire Fred Ross in 1966 (or early 1967) and to pay him the salary he (Fred) requested. Truthfully, I forget the amount but it was significantly higher than the salary stipends paid the new attorneys, for example or me, to use another example. I understood the situation this way: Cesar wanted Fred to work with the union but Fred only worked when he was paid a suitable salary. Cesar decided to pay it and he used the Service Center entity (which I headed up) to pay it. The rationale was that the union was not paying any salaries and even though Fred was receiving a salary, the union was not paying it.

2. As an administrator/ director, I have been paying out salaries for more than 30 years and I have to tell you there is no way to avoid the hurt feelings, the misunderstandings, and the sniping among staff about what so-and-so is being paid for the work he/ she does compared to what "I" am being paid and how hard "I" work. There is no salary system that cannot be characterized as unfair and inequitable by some staff members.

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Marshall Ganz, 5/27/04 (2)

RE: Two Points of Clarification

A number of people asked for clarification of the union seniority issue. First, let me try to clarify one thing about the context of the vote on the legal department.

The fact of the matter was that at the time the union had a pragmatically evolved way of compensating people, some of whom were paid subsistence provided for by the union directly, others of whom were paid modest salaries, and others of whom had outside sources of funding. It was not the lawyers who chose this moment to polarize the union over the question of voluntarism. It was Cesar. It was a strategic choice he made, as a step toward leading the union through a transformation into something with which he could feel safe.

(If you want to read a startling account of the process he was taking the union through you can read an analysis of it in an article published in 1980 in Sociological Analysis, Volume 41, Issue 2, pages 109-127, by Richard Ofshe, "The Social Development of the Synanon Cult: the Managerial Strategy of Organizational Transformation).

The problem was that what made Cesar feel safe was not what farm workers needed at the time.

Specifically, in early 1978 organizers and legal workers were collaborating up and down the state, learning how to combine their skills to keep the new law working for the union. Cesar had always described the union as having three weapons: strikes, boycotts, and legal tactics. In this case, our ability to deploy a core of highly talented and committed lawyers, at next to nothing, supplemented by volunteer lawyers as we needed them, gave us an enormous advantage over the growers -- in terms of talent, commitment, and, perhaps most importantly, the cost of legal services (recall, this was a key reason the Teamsters had settled with us the year before). We could run rings around them and were learning more and more about how to do it all the time. Instead of doing what needed to be done to take advantage of this critical window of opportunity while

Brown remained Governor and we could count on a more or less friendly board (this was 1978, he was just getting re-elected, but we knew he would not have a third term, so we had 4 more critical years in which to get our act together).

So when Cesar proposed getting rid of the legal department, as one of his opening moves to transform the union, I was stunned. What about all the work we were doing? What about all the intellectual capital we had built up in how to handle this stuff? What about all the relationships that had been formed among lawyers, organizers, workers, the board and others, from top to bottom of the system. This had become, it seemed, irrelevant to Cesar. Just a "cost" of the transformation he wanted to make happen. If you want to get a sense of the cost this entailed, take a look at the ALRB records for the years in question -- remember, Dukmejian doesn't come in until 1983 and we're talking 1978 -- and look at the pattern of elections, ULPs, rulings favorable to the UFW, etc. - as well as the suits that were pending, etc. This was not a matter of how talented the new lawyers were. There was simply no way to replace what had been built over a period 12 years in a few months. But, sadly, as we found out, what had taken years to build, only took months to destroy. What shocked me was Cesar's willingness to scuttle a core element in the union's capacity to represent its members, win elections, and get contracts - and, apparently, to get rid of Jerry Cohen -- to pursue a vision wildly different from that of organizing farm workers. It was Cesar's choice, not that of the lawyers, to polarize the union in this particularly destructive way.

Re union seniority, we were trying to figure out a way to transfer worker loyalty from the growers to the union, reward strikers and others who had served the union with more job security, and that would be practical to administer. We also needed to figure out how to work the dues and decided that they would be "year-round", which meant that a seasonal worker, returning to Coachella, for example, would have to pay several months dues for each family member who had joined the union the previous year before we would give them a dispatch card to go to work -- at a ranch, not of their choosing, but of our own, based on their seniority with the union. It amazes me as I write this that we thought the workers in this industry would put up with this. We took as our model, the way the ILWU operated its hiring halls with a union seniority system, creating A cards, B cards, etc. (note, this was based on trying to learn from a successful union).

The problem was that in taking this approach we ignored the fact that (a) the grape workers viewed security with a particular employer as key to their job security and (b) most of the grape workers had never been strikers (unlike the longshoremen), not fought for recognition in solidarity with their union "brothers and sisters" (as the longshoremen had), and had only ratified contracts won through the boycott because their employers told them to, and (c) had only joined the union the previous year because they were required to do so, some of them working only a month or two before the season ended.

So the big job we had before was not one of "consolidating" our power in the table grape industry after an industry wide strike in which everyone had participated, like the longshoremen. Our job was to organize the workers in that industry into becoming strong supporters of the union, while, at the same time, minimizing grower resistance. Instead, we came up with a way to maximize worker resistance, putting many of them squarely on the side of the growers (who came up with the money to pay the "back dues" we demanded before we would dispatch them to work), and destabilizing our relations with the growers -- all at the same time. Cesar was utterly committed to this approach, despite warning by Richard and Gilbert, especially, that this was a disaster in the making.

It became clear what a disaster it was once the season began in Coachella. The first dispatch was to David Freedman Co, where things went very well, because that is where many of the strikers, especially the local workers, had come from. But when we got to the next tier of ranches....large families arrived who had to get loans from the contractor or grower to pay their back dues, workers who regularly worked with this grower or that were told they no longer had this security (the point of a seniority system is to establish non-arbitrary, transparent rules for allocating jobs and preferences -- this is far more important than what kind of seniority system it is),. Union reps became cops whose main job was to make sure no one had gone to work without a dispatch and

had paid their back dues, etc. Instead of paying attention to what was going on, however, we pursued the program with "revolutionary" fervor, ignoring what we were being told by the very people whom we were trying to serve.

Well, the thing finally began to break down by the time we reached Delano and by the time we reached Fresno, Gilbert arranged for everyone to show up, pay respectful attention to our presentation of the new system, and then go back to business as usual the next day. Eventually we let go of it, but not until after we had created a problem that was to plague us for years to come.

By the way, the one place the union seniority system got enthusiastic support was in Salinas, among the workers who had won contracts during the 1970 strike. But these were different workers, with a different history, in a different industry, who had won their contracts in a different way.

I hope this helps.

Marshall

Jose Gomez, 5/27/04

RE: CHATFIELD COMMENTS – JOSE GOMEZ POSTING

Chatfield writes:

There is no salary system that cannot be characterized as unfair and inequitable by some staff members.

This is always true of salary systems, of course, and will always be the case, but doesn't your comment mischaracterize the tension that was at play in the union? There was no "salary system" in the union. The contentious Board vote, after all, was about whether a salary system should be instituted in place of the volunteer system. For you to state that "there is no salary system that cannot be characterized as unfair and inequitable by some staff members" is to ignore the real tension between salaried positions and a fundamental pillar of the union: volunteerism.

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/28/04

RE: Two Points of Clarification

I recall discussing with Lupe the idea of ranch seniority vs. union seniority. The informal connections come harvest time, given the nature of the work force were traditionally established. The importance of winning over that labor force is what I hear you saying wasn't considered. We had organizing efforts in the summer of 69. This was when Lupe left SF to work in Coachella. I went down to visit and more or less cleaned up the trailer where several organizers and volunteers were living outside Coachella.

Are you saying that that the harvest labor force wasn't sufficiently organized to work with the Union come the summer of 1971? And instead of assessing this, the union established the Hiring Hall, wanted dues for the whole year, and expected workers to show up and then go to a ranch where they had never worked? I recall Lupe being uncomfortable with the antipathy that was developing between the workers and the union on these issues.

What about the summer of 73 when the Teamsters came in? How had things evolved? It was certainly a battle, but the ballots favored the UFW.

Kathy Murguia

Richard Cook, 5/28/04

RE: Personal Commitment vs. Rational Analysis

It seems to me much of the NFWA discussion is moving along two different tracks. One is reflection on the inherent value of personal commitment in service to others, i.e. allegiance to a cause greater than one's own mortal life. The other track is the attempt to understand past events

and make some kind of sense of them. These tracks do not critique each other; they are just different ways, of living, and of thinking about life.

I would suppose 99.9 % of all the people who ever worked with the UFW did so primarily to effect change, to make a difference, to transcend the routines of life or at least to live out these routines in the context of a greater allegiance. This kind of living involves choice; we would not have done it if forced to. Self-interest is also involved; we would not have done it if it did not make us feel good. This simply means there is ambiguity and paradox in life and certainly in the way values are lined up and lived out by each person. No one is in a position to make a judgment about another's attempt to live a life of self-transcendence.

But what happened? What came of it? What did it mean? These are proper questions. They are the questions of the historian, that is, of that part of oneself (not shared, as far we know, by other life forms on this planet) that wants to apply some rationality, some method to thinking about the past.

Making history and making a record of what happened are two different activities.

Richard Cook, NFWM 1972-1984 (more or less)

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/28/04

RE: MARY MECARTNEY SALINAS UFW WRITES

Mary Mecartney writes as follows: *"I've been focusing on the vegetable industry based in Monterey County, especially D' Arrigo who now employs over 1,200 harvesting workers and has not negotiated a contract with the UFW since the September 8, 1975, ALRB election. (D' Arrigo is one of the few companies left in the industry that does its own growing/ harvesting/ shipping and did not undergo the labyrinth of corporate restructuring most of the large companies did in the 1980's to undermine the union.)."*

LeRoy Chatfield comments as follows: I have not met Mary Mecartney, but because of her posting, I am genuinely proud to have been associated in the early years with the farmworkers movement for social justice and the UFW, which she now represents in Salinas. I never realized that I would someday be a retired part of an organization that would still pursue - after 39 years - social justice for the D'Arrigo workers by seeking to enforce the results of a farmworker secret ballot election in 1975. I am totally amazed! I am pleased to have played a small role then and to know now that the struggle continues because of the UFW and people like Mary Mecartney.

LeRoy Chatfield 1963-1973

Graciela Martinez (Herron), 5/28/04

RE: Trying to get my message through!

Thanks to Abby who let me know my message hadn't gotten through, so I'm trying again. What I didn't say is that I joined La Causa in September, 1965. Bard McAllister, then coordinator of the program I now coordinate, introduced me to Cesar, who at one point was also employed by the American Friends Service Committee. I got to know David Burciaga, Gilbert Padilla, Hector Abitia and many of the very first huelgistas after Cesar continued the struggle for farmworkers begun by the Filipinos.

I was 19 then, came from a very traditional Mexican family and didn't know much, except that life wasn't quite right for this daughter of a single mother who worked the fields of the San Joaquin Valley to support two children - a story I have since learned has repeated itself time and time again. My world was pretty limited until I joined La Causa. My mother, who grieved to see her only daughter move away from the traditional upbringing. I didn't even realize that deciding to leave home and family was what would lead my mother, myself, and my future family out of poverty. Mother lived to see the positive changes brought about by the labor of all those "true" volunteers of the early days, and of sacrificing her only daughter to this movement. She lived to see the toilets in the fields and the clean drinking water brought about by this struggle.

I don't remember Abby, but I do remember Cynthia and Emmy. I worked in at the 40 Acres in the legal department with Jerry Cohen and Frank Dennison for a while. Before that we were out on the picket lines, helping with El Malcriado, we used to travel in the "Huelga Wagon," which sounds a little like the station wagon some family gave to advance La Causa. I left in about 1972 or 1973, after San Francisco and the Safeway boycotts. I have many, many memories - how Cynthia used to help out with my baby girl, Jenny, while I typed up legal pleadings, or how my daughter Hannah and Emmy used to play together at the house where Cynthia and Emmy lived. I too remember eating breakfast, lunch and dinner at the "Filipino Hall" - the fish head soup (actually very delicious if you could get over your dinner staring at you). Moonlit evenings behind the first tumble-down house turned office, with the other houses behind serving as dormitories for male and female volunteers. I don't ever remember getting \$5 or anything per week, but (later) we did have a nice home with all utilities, clothes from the "dungeon" and food from what was donated from around the state. There was the good and the bad, the beautiful and the ugly, and everything in between, but I can honestly say that my time in furtherance of La Causa was well spent indeed. It exposed me to things and places and people I would not otherwise have been exposed to. Although it meant leaving my job as "part-time secretary" those times actually prepared me to move into the position I have now, and I'm the luckiest person in the world. Cynthia, I don't know if you remember me - you must. We spent many good times together, living, laughing, crying... When I came to work for the AFSC again, in 1997, one day I called the office of Ola Raza in Visalia and you answered the phone. It had been 30 years since we had seen or talked to each other, but I instantly recognized your voice and we spoke of meeting some day but time has a way of marching on and our day has yet to arrive. I don't lose hope that some day we might meet again. God bless you all - us all.

Cynthia Bell, 5/28/04

RE: Graciela/ Message through!

Graciela!!!

It's been so long, of course I remember you. I'm in shock that's it's been over 30 years!!!!

I remember those long hours you used work and I can still see you typing, what were you 100 words per minute my god you were good!

I remember the dinners at Frank Denison's home and how we used to baby him (spoil him). He was a good man have you heard from him? and those days and nights that Emmy and your daughter Hannah would spend together and yes me taking care of Jenney, I remember them all so well.

The Filipino Hall- what memories do you remember how we got our weekly groceries? and how they had a box of unmarked canned goods (pick at your own risk) this was Emmy's job, she was so small and she would take forever in choosing then we would go home and bring out that can opener hoping that we would have some canned fruits (Emmy's favorite fruit-cocktail) she would be so happy, but sadly most of the times it would be spinach or beets or some funky food, every week we would look forward to this big event, what memories.....

This is where we would also get our shabby clothes, I remember when a new load of donation would come in rumors would fly throughout the 40 acres boy did we run to the hall or what.

The Filipino Hall was where Cesar would have his regular Friday night meetings I remember Larry Itliong, Andy Imutan, the room would be filled with staff, farmworkers, supporters and of course our Filipinos brothers what memories. I have a picture of Roberto Garcia, trying to fix Emmy's zipper on her jacket and Cesar is in the background reading some notes (Emmy was around 2 years old) one of my favorite pictures.

I never did like the fish head soup, but I loved the adobo!

Graciela, (I still have my home in Visalia) so you see, I know we will see each other again.

Love y abrazos

Cynthia Bell

Wren Bradley, 5/28/04

RE: MARY MECARTNEY SALINAS UFW WRITES

Hello All, I have been sitting on the sidelines reading in and out of these emails and remembering names and trying to put faces to all these emails. Since I see Mary Mecartney on occasion in Salinas, it made me think about whether to touch base on this email trail. Certainly, I do not have the luxury of reading all the emails because there are just way too many and I told myself that I was absolutely NOT going to "get engulfed" in these emails, but there is a certain addictive quality to these emails when you consider that many of the folks on this email trail shared such an incredibly unique experience that it is possible that no one else around us on a daily basis has a "clue" what it was like or the fact that we were all exposed to some of the most incredible human beings in the universe. When I see names on this trail, like some of my heroes, Chris Hartmire, Marshall Ganz, Dan Boone (and I do not say that lightly) and then remember some of the intense experiences that occurred in the years I was involved in the union as a "volunteer", and see names of folks that probably don't even remember me? What can I say? I just had to at least "check in" and share a bit of what I am up to and honor the other heroes that I am in contact with that may not even be on this email trail....so here I go. My name is Wren Bradley, I came to the Union in 1976 to specifically work on the "60 days for social justice" (yes on 14-Si Con 14) and passed through Los Angeles on my way to Orange County. I had the very good fortune of getting called as soon as I got to Orange County to come back to L.A. and work for Chris Hartmire as his "Ministry side" Administrative assistant. Marshall was there representing the UFW side with Chris Woods as his Administrative Assistant. What a hell of a campaign! Two of the most memorable names from this campaign were Muffin and Will Kirkland...I did the statewide newsletter on that campaign. I ended up staying, so I worked from 1976 to 1979. At the time I left, I was the Director for the Salinas National Farm Worker Health Group in Salinas. I closed down the Salinas health clinic in a trail of tears. It was and continues to be one of the most painful experiences in my life. I still to this day know in my heart that this was one of the worst mistakes that Cesar made. At the same time, it was the experience that made me understand that Cesar was a mere mortal just like me. He made mistakes. Prior to that, I was one of those totally "gaga" believers. I mean no disrespect to any one who may be on this email trail, but I believe that Cesar surrounded himself too closely with a tight knit group that still had a belief that infiltrators were in the Union and many of them lived in Salinas. Frank Ortiz was the "hitman" who came to Salinas to close down the clinic. Nothing we did or said as volunteers and nothing that farm workers said or did made a dent to influence the reprieve of the clinic (1978). This was clearly a moment in time when my naiveté went out the window. People in the clinic at the time deserve their names in print, Randy Alto (who has since died), his eventual wife Jane Brown, Tasha Doner (who worked in the clinic and plan medico and another one of my heroes), Margaret Murphy (who eventually married Jeff Sweetland and I saw last November in Milwaukee), Susan Ardisson (who I see on occasion in Salinas- who was earlier out of the Pittsburgh boycott and now a P.A. in the County health clinics), Dr. Marco (Mark Sapir, who I saw once about five years ago in Solano County), Eileen Donnelly (a P.A. in Santa Cruz co) Larry Bruegera (who I recently ran into in Sacramento on a Lobby day-now a full-fledged M.D., Pablo Romero, dr. in Salinas, Antonio Velasco, also an M.D. in Salinas. Also, we had the good fortune of having many good field staff at the 15 S. Wood location in Salinas(now gone) Roberto Garcia the director (still alive and doing really, really well) and todo su familia, Minnie, Roberto Jr., Raul and Minnie Jr. (who just had a baby), Sister Betty (who has since died), Juan Huerta Sr. (who I see and looks the same and his son Juan Huerta Jr. is Mayor of Greenfield and may be the next board of supervisor from the district on Monterey County-we have district elections due to DOJ rules), and former legal staff in Salinas, Glenn Rothner, Sandy Nathan, Dan Boone, Deborah, Bill Monning (another one of my true heroes), Jerry Cohen, Dana Kent (now a family doctor helping poor working families in a county health center), Charlie Atilano (former security guard for Cesar and then paralegal in Salinas after he and I were married and have two beautiful daughters, Jacinta and Eriela-but we are now divorced but good friends), Larry Abrams (now an attorney) and Dorothy Martinez (now married to each other) and so many others that I didn't know.....the memories just pour in.....what

a time...While I personally did not suffer a "purge", many of my friends were purged from the union. And I remember being part of the "game". That was one of the sickest moments of the UFW movement. I cringe when I think that I was a part of that particular piece. But, to tell you the truth, I was so grateful for the entire experience that this particular piece pales in comparison.

My roots are still very much involved in social justice issues and the labor movement. However, I have become somewhat cynical about labor. Perhaps, it is my experience in Monterey County. I stayed here and saw the demise of the UFW and the destruction of the labor movement that occurred about the demise. It was not a pretty picture. There was a time when farm workers had real power, but that's clearly gone. No union movement has been able to capture what the UFW had in the "old days". But for me, I look at this as life just unfolding. I am not so critical because who knows, perhaps this is the way it is supposed to unfold. Does the UFW have the same strength they had in the old days? Absolutely not. But they are still a force to reckon with. In November, we had to grapple with the Recall on Governor Davis. The UFW led the charge. We (I now work for SEIU 535) worked with UFW and kicked ass. In little old Monterey County, we beat back the recall. Every farm worker with gray hair was out walking precincts. And the number of youth involved in this recall was remarkable. All due to the UFW. So they may not be organizing as many farm workers into unions, but they can still put folks out on the street. Further, their new branch, LUPE, we are totally plugged into and are making a difference in terms of voter registration, votes cast, holding the elections department accountable to dealing with issues of Spanish speakers, etc.

We still have a fairly large community of former volunteer staff and farm workers here who are in other labor organizations, social justice groups but to tell you the truth, we have such along way to go. I now work for SEIU 535 representing workers who deal with the most disenfranchised of the community, the mentally ill, the poor, families who have abused or neglected their children, elders who have been abused. In that context, I see the worst in folks and I get to see the incredible strength that still exists within the community. On a daily basis, I see the fruits of the labor of the old UFW. The workers I represent now are the children and grand children of former farm workers in Sun Harvest, Mann Packing, las fresas. On a daily basis, I still am moved by the force the UFW had on this community. The sadness is that the labor movement here, today, in its entirety, has not been able to capture a fraction of what the UFW could do in the 70s.

This is where I weigh in and some people may not like it. I always thought in the old days (and I cannot even tell you why), that attorneys for the union deserved more than the \$5 a week allowance. But for the rest of us? I thought it important that we maintain the \$5 because it was a commitment to "la causa". On the long haul, however, I could not have sustained that once I started child bearing. So, I quit once I got pregnant. I saw too many ragamuffins in La Paz and could not bear seeing my children like that. Again, I don't mean to offend anyone, I am just being completely honest.

But what I see today in Monterey County, one of the hearts of the UFW, is business unionists to the top level. It is no longer about the workers, but is about clear cut egotism and self-aggrandizement. As a woman, I still feel like I am in a throw back in time because women in labor are still not valued. As another great woman put it whose name escapes me, "women in the labor movement" in Monterey County, California are "always the bridesmaids but never the bride". We fight an uphill battle, one which on days I am proud to be part of and other days, I think we are worse than the Farm Bureaus of America....

I want to say to everyone that takes the time to read this email. You made an incredible difference in the farm worker movement. I see the rewards of your efforts every single day when I go to worksites and young people tell me about their involvement in the UFW or their parents' or grandparents' involvement. But, do not give up the lucha. As Cesar always said (something to this effect anyway), we cannot let down for a moment, for when we do, the right wing (in whatever form it is) seizes the moment and captures our soul! Viva la lucha! wRen Bradley, SEIU Local 535, Sr. Field Representative/ organizer.... p.s. I am on my way to Georgia for two

months to work on a statewide campaign to organize child protective services social workers. I was one a CPS social worker for 12 years and now represent them in my local...

Graciela Cisneros, 5/29/04

RE: seniority

Marshall your 5-27 email has my head spinning.

It is only now that I can begin to see the seniority and dues problem. I wonder, should each crop have had a seniority system? should the ufw not have had a seniority system? was the goal of the ufw to become financially self supporting thru dues?

I felt that the union wanted to be everything to everyone. credit union, clinic, co-ops., dining halls, create communities.. the reality of running a union is different.

In boycott cities, we raised funds pitching the rights of farmworkers to organize, better working conditions, etc. I think it was harder to raise funds after the union won elections and had contracts.

I have more questions, but have a difficult time formulating them at this time, many of them aren't even complete sentences.

graciela cisneros
1971-73

Tom Dalzell, 5/29/04

RE: Paid Reps

Larry Frank asked about the paid reps, how they fit in with the volunteer/paid staff debate. There are people who know more about the paid reps than I do, but here is what I know.

The idea of paid reps emerged in the negotiations and strike that started in the Imperial Valley in early 1979 and migrated to Salinas when the lettuce deal moved there in the spring. The concept came from the UAW contracts with the auto industry, and it seemed a logical evolution of our existing elected Ranch Committee structure (which when operating at its optimum actually bypassed many of the problems that the Union was not able to solve on a macro level, such as handling its own dispatch - I hope Doug Adair speaks up on this point). Under the paid rep system, the employer pays the union representative (ranch committee representative) as if he or she were still working with the premise that fast, low-level resolution of grievances is in everybody's best interest.

The vegetable industry strike of 1979 was extraordinary. I had worked on almost every California strike since the Lamanuzzi-Pantaleo strike in Delano in August 1972, and I never saw worker leadership comparable to that which emerged in 1979. This strike was not the result of a mobilization, it was the result of organizing, a big difference. The bargaining committee was the strike leadership. I saw them in action in many of the daily meetings with Marshall and Ann Smith. They were the polar opposite of window dressing when it came to the negotiations, and they - not staff - had the major responsibility on the picket lines.

After Rufino Contreras was killed in February, Cesar sent a group from La Paz to shut down the strike in Imperial. Marshall moved north, and I believe in spite of Cesar's wishes the strike continued in Salinas with much of the same worker leadership. In the face of growing opposition to the strike by Cesar, it spread. Using the divide-and-conquer approach that Cesar had rejected in negotiations with the grape industry in the summer of 1973, we reached agreement first with Meyer Tomatoes, then with West Coast Farms, then with Sun Harvest, and then with most of the Salinas vegetable growers. These contracts had paid rep language; they also had a basic hourly rate of \$5.00 (a big number then) and an RFK contribution level for piece rate workers that for the first time would give them meaningful medical coverage.

As I remember, Cesar did not participate in these negotiations other than to lead a planning conference in La Paz in the late fall or early winter of 1978 where he warned the workers present

that there were spies in their midst - "where there is honey, there are flies" he said. At the off-year political convention held at Hartnell College in the summer of 1979, Cesar developed a crippling headache and could not meet with the bargaining committee after the convention to strategize, and I do remember great difficulty in getting the actuaries for RFK to come up with a hourly contribution rate for piece rate workers. Frank Denison ended up suggesting a worst-case, very high contribution rate which we used and got.

Cesar increasingly opposed the Salinas strike, and in fact shortly after the convention ordered a stop to the strike and assigned all staff then working on the strike to the boycott. The strike staff (including, if I am not mistaken and I might be - Artie) ignored the assignment, continued with the strike, and within a week or two the strike had been won and the prediction by Cleofas Guzman ("esta huelga esta ganada") had come true.

This is only the beginning of the paid rep story. They emerged from a tough and successful strike as competent, respected leaders who had ignored Cesar's attempts to end their strike. While ignoring Cesar's efforts to end the strike, they still respected him and considered themselves Chavistas. In my mind they were the great hope of the Union, which after all was about workers, not about us from the outside.

Tom Dalzell

Ellen Eggers, 5/29/04

RE: Paid Reps

Tom: Thank you for providing those details. I was in law school while most of this was taking place. You certainly make a compelling case for your position. In fact, it's so compelling that I can't imagine what others might say in response. After I returned in 1980, I was in on some meetings leading up to the convention where the paid reps walked out. That was the year that the Salinas workers were submitting an alternate slate of candidates, not challenging Cesar, but definitely challenging several of Cesar's choices for board members. I remember feeling puzzled as to why that was so terribly threatening to the leadership. But it was...Cesar won that fight, though I would be reluctant to call it a fair fight. The reps certainly didn't see it as fair, which is why they walked out of the convention. Cesar took that opportunity to fire all of them, claiming that he had appointed them. In fact, they had all been elected ranch committee presidents. Cesar had previously agreed that whoever was elected president, would be the paid rep. When the reps sued Cesar in federal court, it was my job to represent Cesar. The ONLY way I was able to stomach that whole thing was by allowing myself to become "a believer" in the position that Marshall was really trying to take over the Union and create his "fiefdom" up in Salinas. It never felt right at the time, and it feels simply awful now. I so regret having participated in all of that. But that's what was thrown on my plate. Working in the Union's legal dept had been something I had wanted to do and planned to do for years. It never occurred to me to just quit. But obviously that's what I would have had to do if I had refused. At that point, I just didn't have enough information. I was being told just one side of it, and only had my instincts to tell me otherwise. But I really, really struggled with that whole thing. I never, ever, felt good about what we were doing to those guys up in Salinas. I understand now why people are using the word "tragedy" . . . but at the same time, I think we need to remember that like most tragedies, they spring from human weakness. I think MANY of us, had we been through all that Cesar had been through, might have reacted in the same way. But it seems pretty clear to me right now that he was dead wrong, and while the accolades properly fall on him for what he built, the criticism must also fall on him for what he tore down, up in Salinas.

Abby Flores, 5/29/04 (1)

RE: Paid Reps

Ellen, you should not feel bad for what happened while you worked for the union. Marshal did want to take-over the union. Apparently, he was unhappy with the decisions being made by the Board (of which he was a member) and kicks himself for giving Cesar so much authority. (At least that is what you said, Marshal, in the documentary film on Cesar I watched on PBS a few

years back.) It came down to Marshal (and the reps he organized) and Cesar, at the convention, and Cesar won. There was nothing "dead wrong" about what Cesar did. Every union works to select and elect a favorable slate for its Executive Board, and we are truly naïve if we believe differently. It was a fair "fight", but it was not the outcome Marshal and his reps, Sabino, Marcos, Cleofas and the rest expected. The only "tragedy" I see here is that the reps sued Cesar, the one individual who had taught them and had helped them lose their fear and to stand up for their rights. I certainly hope that wherever they are today, they are displaying that same fearlessness they displayed against Cesar against growers and injustices at work.

My comment is the same as yours, Ellen, but regarding Marshall. While the accolades fall on him, so too must the criticism. I have the utmost respect for him and for the work he did to form our union. I understand why he would want to protect what he so selflessly helped to create. None of these events should detract from our feeling of having done the right thing and for the varied, honorable reasons we had when we chose to contribute our time, energy and talents to the cause during the time we served as volunteers. /abby/ richgrove/ delano

Wren Bradley, 5/29/04

RE: Paid Reps

Abby, if you are talking about Sabino Lopez, I can vouch that he is still committed to social justice issues. He works for the Center for Community Advocacy in Salinas helping farm workers with affordable housing issues, renters' rights, etc. As far as, did Marshall want to take over the union? It's one thing to be unhappy with decisions a board makes, but to suggest that he wanted to "take over the union" might be an exaggeration....unless you have proof of that, of course. And if you do, I will apologize right now for my naïveté... wRen Bradley

Daneen Montoya, 5/29/04

RE: Paid Reps

Abby, thanks for your comments. I've never understood why we have to play "Let's choose up sides and hate those who think differently than we do". These things do evolve as unions (and organizations in general) grow.

What is so good about this dialogue is that for the first time, many of us are making the effort to understand how the process came about. I for one am beginning to tie together bits of information I had and couldn't completely understand. I am grateful to those of you who have had the courage to speak your convictions, regardless of where you stand.

This dialogue is so valuable in understanding our individual and collective participation in this piece of history. I hope the dialogue continues and I hope that we hear from others who have not yet graced us with their thoughts.

Again, thank you Abby, Marshall, and to every one of the dialogue participants.

Best regards,

Danee Montoya
1968 – 1972-73

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/29/04 (2)

RE: Paid Reps

Hello Wren,

It is not a suggestion; I clearly stated it. Only Marshall can tell me if it is an "exaggeration" or not. I do not believe it is. Since Sabino is nearby, ask him to shed some light on this for you. By the way, I am aware of Sabino's work not does it change the question I posed. The last time I saw him he was working for SEIU in San Diego with Eliseo, as was my husband, Jorge. He asked my husband and I if we wished to rent his condo because he was moving to Salinas. I was always respectful toward him whenever I saw him even though I did not like what he had done.

I remember your husband when he worked in security with my husband. I am glad you and he are doing well albeit separately. sin mas, abby/ richgrove/ delano

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/30/04 (1)

RE: Paid Reps

Abby, thanks for your comments re: my home at La Paz. I guess this is what being a mom is all about creating a safe place etc. Helen was a great model for that, and she gave me the support I needed to maintain that posture. I really don't know what a "fair" fight is. Rumors and innuendos are powerful even when they don't have the facts to support them. They are, at times, more powerful than facts, because they are so fused with inferences and a shadow of reality, neither fact nor fiction. Joaquin was told some things about Susan, because someone decided she wasn't suitable for Joaquin. I was told things about Lupe, that were certainly distortions and properly, we needed to discuss with each other. I believe much of this came as a way of having power and influencing people in their perceptions of others and events. I think some folks had become so good at this, they got to the point where they had difficulty distinguishing fact from fiction, and it reached far beyond the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. I also believe the folks most skilled at promoting rumors had the greatest to hide and it was in part a deflection, and an attempt to maintain a position of power in the context of their relationships. I too, hold in high regard what La Causa brought to farmworkers and to a whole generation, and my respect for Cesar's sacrifices and love of Helen continue. Kathy

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/30/04

RE: Paid Reps

Hi, Kathy. I'm not certain what happened to Joaquin but I do recall when someone told another couple they shouldn't marry. I certainly wished they would have tried that on me. A fair fight to me is to call them all out and face them. That was wrong and to this day I cannot believe I didn't go tell that couple to tell *that* person to go jump in the lake. I think some people did meddle and it was wrong. However, at this point in time, I tend to give them the benefit of the doubt that it might have been *due to the dynamics of where we lived or perhaps that we cared about one another as a family*. (I was happy to learn last year that after all these years that particular couple is still together.) I cannot believe all you endured and do recall some of it. (I enjoyed your comments about the CS Committee.) There is so much more for people to criticize when you are a large family which is why you had to deal with so much. It was like that with my family. It was a good day if no one had gotten into one scrap or another in the neighborhood. Why would it have been any different for kids in La Paz? You were tough and stuck up for your family; be proud of that. If I needed advice, I always searched out Helen's as you say you did. I liked and agree with what you said about "rumors and innuendos." * * * * abby/ richgrove/ delano

Terry Carruthers (Vasquez) Scott, 5/30/04

RE: New Baby Announcement

Hi All:

Just wanted to share some happy news with you: My son Chris and his girlfriend Marie are the proud parents of a brand new baby daughter... Haylie Marie Vasquez, born May 30th; 6 lbs., 13 oz., 19 inches long. Mom and baby are doing great, and Chris is absolutely over the moon! (As am I!!)

For those who don't know Chris, he is Elizer and my second son, and was born in 1983 when we lived at La Paz. He was a champion mischief maker and I imagine a few of you remember his exploits... one particularly vivid recollection I have is of getting a call that Chris (age 3) had escaped the Montessori School at the North Unit, ran down towards the mechanic shop, managed to climb the ladder to the diesel tank and was laughing and running back & forth on top of the tank (which was about 15 feet off the ground) while several adults were variously scolding/ telling/ pleading with him to get down... Raising him was never dull, and despite our occasional worries,

he's turned into a wonderfully caring young man... but it's still hard to believe that my baby is a Dad (and that I'm a grandma!)

All the Best,

Terry (Vasquez) Scott

Marshall Ganz, 5/30/04

RE: Paid Reps

Abby,

One of the most startling experiences anyone can have is to read intentions attributed to you that you never had.

Why don't you ask me if I wanted to "take over the union"?

If I had, why would I have left? Why would I think I could? Why would I want to?

I think all of us -- and I mean the board -- were mistaken in not fighting to establish locals within the union so that there would have been more autonomous centers of power and, thus, more accountability.

But we didn't.

Instead, most of us left precisely because we didn't want to - or didn't feel we could - challenge Cesar.

But I was surprised at the lengths to which he went - and the fear he must have felt - to crush farm worker leaders within the union who had the guts to run their own candidates for the board. I was also surprised -- and deeply saddened - over the degree to which he would use scapegoats -- and antisemitism - in the process.

So, again, I'll have to use that word that caused so much offense to some.

This is "nonsense"!

Marshall

Jeff Sweetland, 5/30/04

RE: Volunteer Staff System

As I read the ongoing conversation about stipend vs. salary, the divide between the two sides seems profoundly cultural. On the one hand those who defend and extol the volunteer system and Cesar's commitment to it find any focus on material reward not merely incomprehensible but a betrayal of everything the Union stood for. On the other hand those who advocated a transition to a paid staff find the other side a bit mad and equally incomprehensible. So this got me thinking, which is never a good thing, as the following observations will demonstrate:

Looking back, what strikes me is how Catholic the whole volunteer staff system was. Wasn't it very much a product of Cesar's own Catholicism, in both conception and implementation? Didn't Cesar see the volunteer staff as a "vocation" in the same way that the Roman Catholic Church sees its clergy and religious orders? Certainly, as it developed, the Union demanded of its volunteers some of the same commitments that the Church demands of its priests and religious - obedience, discipline and (in many religious orders) poverty. Perhaps the commitment to poverty began as a practical way to attract a lot of people to come to work for an organization that did not have any money with which to pay them anyway. Did Cesar, however, envision more than a simple, conscious commitment to poverty that outwardly marks one as "in solidarity" with the farm workers? Did he, in fact, envision the volunteer staff as an intentional spiritual community, in which every volunteer embraced poverty as a spiritual end in itself, so that the staff community could give prolonged, genuine and selfless service to farm workers, in the same way that religious orders served God by serving their fellow men and women? Going a step further, did Cesar see

the Union itself as itself a spiritual community of farm workers, ministered to by the staff community?

If the answer to each of these questions is arguably yes, then did the impetus to replace the volunteer stipend with a salary represent, to Cesar, the complete abandonment of his vision for the Union?

On the other hand, the Union's recruitment efforts rarely presented volunteer staff service as a quasi-religious "vocation" that would demand the deepest spiritual commitment. Rather, the pitch was, as in my case, "Come and help Cesar Chávez and the farm workers save their Union." Nor did it limit its recruitment to people who had grown up in a Catholic tradition, as Cesar had. Consequently, however easily Cesar's vision may have resonated with many on the staff, particularly in La Paz, it was not nearly as instinctive to many others, who did not share the same upbringing and traditions.

For many of the others, the \$5 weekly stipend made tremendously good sense when the Union had its back to the wall and very little money. The goal for them was to restore the Union to its rightful place in the industry, something that could only be done with contracts backed by legally enforceable collective bargaining representation. One happy result of this development would be a reliable stream of dues money and a more secure treasury. With this, staff, including farm workers, could be offered a more "realistic" compensation, so that they could make long-term careers in the Union.

This, I think, was the vision that most of the attorneys in Salinas shared. Cesar's vision guided most of the staff in La Paz, though it had much less of an influence in the Legal Department. Both visions, though mutually irreconcilable, were based on equally firm commitments to the farm workers' cause and equally good-faith beliefs as to how best to serve that cause.

These are some of my thoughts. (I shall not burden you with the rest of them). They may have no validity whatever, though I believe they do. I offer them up for discussion and all appropriate debunking.

Jeff Sweetland
1975-1978
Long Beach boycott, Calexico, LA Legal, Salinas Legal

Georgia McFadden Lyga, 5/30/04

RE: Volunteer Staff System

Your thoughts on Catholicism make a lot of sense. I'm wondering how many "exs" there were: ex-priests, ex-nuns, ex-brothers. I can think of a dozen without even breaking a sweat!

Georgia Lyga (formerly McFadden)
Delano, Lamont, Colton 1971-73

Lester Silverman, 5/30/04

RE: Paid Reps

[Marshall -] Can you be more specific with respect to and cite Cesar's antisemitism.

Lester Silverman

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/31/04 (1)

RE: Paid Reps

Abby: No it wasn't the petty stuff. My skin is much too thick for that. The one big one for me, which I wrote about in my essay, had to do with being told that Ana had 48 hrs to leave La Paz, which was then our home. Who in the @+x can tell a parent that their kid can't stay in their home, unless they are removed by some kind of law enforcement for a crime. Something had shifted. The other stuff was normal living, but not devastating. It's very complicated and Abby you were a loyal, kind Chavista. Con carino kathy Murguia

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/31/04 (1)

RE: New Baby Announcement

Congratulations, Terry! I remember the incident you refer to. Yes, Chris was full of energy and loved his mischief. Congratulate him on his baby girl. It is great fun being a grandma. Gina's son is two years old, and my pride and joy. Have fun, and enjoy!

Barbara

Barbara Macri-Ortiz, 5/31/04 (2)

RE: Paid Reps

Marshall,

Are we seeing a pattern? It seems that whenever you don't agree with someone's opinion, you discount it as "nonsense". Abby's opinion is not nonsense, and based on my best recollection, I share her view of history. You have painted Cesar as some sort of crazy paranoid maniac who totally lost all sense of reason and morality. As Administrator of the Legal Dept. and later as an attorney, I worked very closely with Cesar for ten years after you left, and notwithstanding the disagreements we had during that period, I can attest to the fact that Cesar was not crazy, nor had he lost his moral compass.

What I am seeing in these e-mails is that some folks paint our history in a way that is convenient to validate or justify their particular course of conduct. The facts seem to be colored in a way to support whatever proposition they are arguing.

Marshall, I have known you a long time. I first worked with you in Salinas in 1970 during the strike (I was the strike coordinator for the Pic N Pac strawberry workers). I was part of the group of farm workers and volunteers who were sent to establish the Lettuce Boycott in October, at the end of the strike. Although I was sick at the time, I went to Denver with Chester Ruiz, Annie Carpenter, and three farm worker families. We were very successful in Denver, especially after Bud Antle had Cesar jailed. We completely shut down all Antle lettuce coming into the area. You took note, and decided you wanted to send me to St. Louis. I was not too keen on the idea as I was still coughing and having problems breathing, and I told you so. Then my grandmother died and I came back to California for the funeral. Instead of reporting to St. Louis, I went to Delano. Dolores took one look at me and decided that I needed to be seen by Dr. Lackner. She drove me to San Jose and I found out that I had walking pneumonia. Dr. Lackner gave me some medication and told me to take it easy.

In the meantime you found out that I was in Delano and you demanded that Cesar fire me. Dolores interceded, and got Cesar to assign me to work with her. I assisted her with the Christian Brothers (Napa) and Almaden (Hollister) negotiations. I was impressed with how well the worker committees took care of their business, administering their contracts, gathering the contract demands, arguing their cases, etc.

In addition to working with Dolores I was assigned to work in contract administration in Delano. I started working in contract administration in Delano in the spring of 1971 with Frank Ortiz, Joey Rubio and Robert Bustos. We had 54 contracts to administer. Other staff came and went - Cipriano Ferrel (God rest his soul), Carlos Fierros, Roberto De Leon, and others. We kept recruiting as best we could. We had to fight to be allowed to continue to do the work. You, Marshall were always trying to rip off the contract administrators for whatever project you were working on. [And I am not just talking about the days in Delano. This pattern continued unabated during every campaign that you headed.] You criticize Cesar for not being committed to contract administration but you were the one who had Cesar's ear, and you were always quick to steal anyone you could for your projects - and your projects were never about contract administration.

As for contract administration in Delano during the early days, I talk about what we did in my essay, if anyone is interested. We recognized the importance of contract administration, and busted our ass training workers and processing grievances and we did a lot of good work. We

trained a lot of worker ranch committees and stewards that would later become the strike leaders in the 1973 strike, and then the new wave of boycotters. The hiring hall and seniority provisions helped to stabilize the work force, and the clinic funded with the RFK contributions made a huge difference in people's lives. We built a network and when Cesar decided to call the strike in Delano in the summer of 1973, we were able to mobilize thousands of workers in a matter of hours to take the strike vote at the 40 acres because a strong ranch committee/steward network was in place where they could quickly get the word out to their members. (That meeting at the 40 Acres is documented in *Fighting for Our Lives*, for those of you who may be interested).

Based on my experience, I disagree with much of what has been stated about the lack of contract administration in the early days, at least as it related to Delano. I know Coachella was pretty wild. We had a couple of staff there who never stopped fighting with the growers, believing their mission in the Union was to take back the land that had been stolen from Mexico. Their attitude certainly strained relations with those growers, especially Freedman and Larson. For the most part the other growers pretty much hated the Union and were waiting for the chance to crush us (they eventually followed the lead of the Salinas growers, bringing in the Teamsters in 1973). Contract Administration in the Central Valley did not suffer from the same internal infirmity. I remember that Gil Padilla also ran a pretty tight ship up in Selma. We did our job as best as we knew how, and everyone was learning every day. One thing to remember – the growers didn't know what they were doing either. And some of the Delano Bunch was also waiting for the chance to crush us. Have you forgotten the Contract that was put out on Cesar's life by Sandrini in 1971? We should really put the early contract administration experience in perspective by also looking at what was going on around us.

In my opinion Marshall, you had no clue about the importance of contract administration or what it was all about until very late in the game, i.e. around the time of the 1979 vegetable strike. You were in charge of the strike, and unfortunately it got out of control, and Rufino Contreras was murdered at a Mario Saikhon lettuce field. Cesar reacted, much as he did when Nagi and Juan De La Cruz were killed during the 1973 strike. It was only a matter of time before he would call off the strike and revert to the boycott. Was he wrong to do so? Under the circumstances, I don't think so.

The mobilization of the boycott got some of the growers' attention. I remember that my assignment, as I left for Chicago, was to go after SunHarvest [Interharvest] and the Chiquita Banana label. By the time I got to Chicago, SunHarvest had already signed a contract. A few other companies fell in line. Cesar then changed the focus of the boycott to Bruce Church, and we quickly were successful in knocking the "Red Coach" brand out of practically every major chain store in Detroit, Chicago, New York, Pennsylvania, and a number of cities in the South. We pretty much shut down Bruce Church's markets throughout the country with the exception of California, of all places. But that was because you, Marshall, were supposed to report to L.A. to run the campaign against Lucky's, which was the biggest customer of Red Coach lettuce. Unfortunately for the workers and the Union, you refused the assignment (or at least never showed up), and we missed a golden opportunity, as timing is everything. Our resources had to be scattered to pick up the extra work load that you rejected, and unfortunately, we were unable to sustain the successes in all the cities at the same time. As a result, instead of agreeing to a contract, Bruce Church was able to regroup, file an action against the boycott in Arizona, and a RICO case against the Union in federal court in Fresno. Need I remind anyone that when Cesar died, he was in Arizona specifically to testify in that Arizona case? Would history have been different had Marshall accepted his assignment? Now that's an interesting question, but of course no one will ever know the answer.

On the subject of the paid reps, the contract provision creating them was wonderful. We previously had some success negotiating paid time for grievance reps (just a few hours to process grievances), but having a full-time paid staff person to administer the contract at each ranch was a huge gain. But Marshall, by then you seemed to have your own agenda, and from my vantage point it sure looked like you tried to use those guys for your own power play, and the next thing we know all hell broke loose. The paid reps were doing everything BUT administering the contracts properly and Cesar had to act. The reps were STAFF with responsibilities and

obligations and authority that were delegated from the President of the Union. They were duty bound to adhere to Union policies and procedures, and the Union was legally responsible for their actions, whether it be for a duty of fair rep claim or a wild cat strike. Cesar did not remove them from their positions as President of their ranch committees, but as the paid UFW staff person. He had no choice because he had to protect the Union. After they were removed, they got a lawyer in San Francisco to file an action in federal court, and that is the mess that Ellen Eggers had to wade through. It was very painful to ALL of us. We did not like having to fight the workers in court, but again, they were suing the Union, and we had an obligation to defend the Union. I knew most of reps personally, and it was very hard for me too, but it had to be done. And in fact, Cesar's action was found to be proper, as the case was ultimately thrown out on a Summary Judgment Motion that I filed shortly after getting my license.

I am sure Marshall, that if you are still reading this, you are ready to hit the reply button with another "nonsense" reply. I do not write this to attack you, but only to set the record straight. I doubt that you will ever take any responsibility for what transpired during this sad chapter of our history, as it appears that you prefer to paint Cesar as some crazy maniac. It is easy to attack a dead man because he can't respond. It is also easy for one to color his/her view of history according to the personal pain one experienced or the bitterness harbored in one's heart. However, I believe that such clouds and distorts our view of history. I am sorry, but the gospel according to Marshall doesn't come close to the "truth" that I lived through during my twenty year stay in the Union.

That is not to say that Cesar was a saint or that he didn't make mistakes. And it is probably healthy for us to talk about some of those mistakes, especially as they impacted our view of the movement, our leadership and each other. With respect to Cesar, I never considered him a saint or a God, nor was I afraid to give him my opinions. I guess that was because I was lucky to have an encounter with him early on. I will never forget that experience. It was June, 1971. My sister had just given birth to her first child. I wanted to go home to see my sister and my niece, but my car needed tires. At the time the only tires the Union was buying were retreads. I didn't want retreads mainly because I knew from my father's work in a gas station that retreads are no good in Calif. because the smog rots the casings (so the treads look great but the sides of the tires are all rotten). I of course raised this issue to no avail. So the retreads were put on the car, and I took off to Ontario. I get as far as McFarland and get a blowout. The car went all over the road. I did not crash but I was pretty shaken, and mad. So I changed the tire and very slowly drove back to Delano - Cesar still had his office there. I then proceeded to roll the blown out tire into Cesar's office and I gave him a piece of my mind. He didn't kick me out. He stopped what he was doing and listened, then looked at my tire, and then changed the policy - no more retreads were to be purchased!

I guess I was lucky because I had relationships with both Cesar and Dolores where I felt I could give my opinion for what it was worth. Granted, it wasn't always considered or accepted, but I was comfortable enough to stand up and fight for what I thought was right. I was not afraid to argue or fight with either Cesar or Dolores (or anyone else for that matter), [probably I learned that working with Dolores], and I think that must have made a huge difference in my perspective because it sounds like so many people either felt they couldn't provide that input or chose not to out of insecurity or fear. I guess I was just too young or too stupid to care much at the beginning, and then it was just natural for me to continue speaking my mind.

Sorry for the length of this e-mail. I have been taking everything in for quite awhile, so I guess it is just all coming out. Not to mention that it is a holiday so the office is quiet.

My best to everyone and their families, and I hope that this Memorial Day will cause our nation to take another look at what we are doing in Iraq.

Peace,

Barbara Macri-Ortiz
(1969-1990)

Kate Colwell, 5/31/04 (1)

RE: Memorial Day

I'll use today's holiday to mention that this discussion has made me think many times of the volunteers and former volunteers who died. Also of the fear that sprung up in the late 70s that maybe working in Kern County was cancer producing because so many women seemed to be getting cancer..... even without working in the fields.

Wendy Simon died of recurrent melanoma in the summer of 1979 a few years after leaving La Paz. Carolyn and I visited with her the day before she died in her parents home in S. Wellfleet, MA.

Bob (???) died of a seizure at La Paz... also about 1980. He had been the phlebotomist at the Sanger clinic.

I'm embarrassed that I can't remember the name of a beautiful tiny nun who taught in Delano. She got breast cancer and died living with members of her order in a house in East LA.

Feliciano Candido from Agbayani village and I corresponded for many years. I last saw him when he visited me in SF in about 1980. I understand all the manongs have now passed on.

I know there were others....

I'm very conscious that beyond our commitment to farm workers' rights, we were also a spread-out, cantankerous community of people who celebrated births and weddings and other happiness together and mourned deaths and separations and other tragedies together.

Kate Colwell

Jeff Fromberg, 5/31/04

RE: Anti-semitism

Hi

This message is also in response to Marshall's comments.

I was with the union in 1971 and had come from NYC to replace Father David Duran as the union's accountant. I stayed with the union for just over a year.

I hadn't been reading many of the original group of e-mails, but a later one making references to some kind of racism within the movement caught my eye. So when I read Marshall's comment about anti-semitism (I believe he referred to Cesar's anti-semitism), I also wondered what he had in mind.

In view of the fact that both he and Fred Ross were Jewish (at least I think they were or are) and so many volunteers were also Jewish, it's hard to imagine that this would be an issue for anyone.

I'd be interested in hearing more.

Jeff Fromberg

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/31/04 (1)

RE: Memorial Day

[Kate -] Thank you for sharing about Feliciano. We kept in touch for a while. The last correspondence I received from him was shortly after he moved to Arleta, CA. I never heard from him again. He was a special friend to me from 40 Acres/Delano. He was so thoughtful. On hot days he would show up with ice cold sodas or ice cream; he would never take no for an answer. I missed visiting with him when I left to work at La Paz. His company made my day go by faster. sin mas/ abby/ richgrove/ delano

Marshall Ganz, 5/31/04

RE: Paid Reps

So Barbara,

Just when was I trying to take over the union?

Marshall

LeRoy Chatfield, 5/31/04

RE: NO OFFENSE TAKEN, MIKE

Mike Johnston writes: *"My question is this: are those folks on this list, and were they invited to submit, or was somewhat of a distinction drawn between volunteers and paid staff? No offense, Leroy, you have done a great job pulling this together, but if they are not on this list, maybe they should be."*

LeRoy Chatfield responds: "No offense taken, Mike. (Well, maybe a small one worth mentioning is the capital "R" in my first name. Don't worry about it. I have spent the last 40 years helping people to get it spelled correctly.) (Just kidding.)

I make no distinction between volunteers and paid staff. And I have to remind you that I am completely dependent upon other UFW volunteers sending forward names (and contact addresses, especially email addresses) of all those who should be included. Please remember that I had left the UFW by the end of 1973 and in my last few years I spent a great deal of time away from La Paz (longer still from my Delano days) working on the L.A. boycotts, Cesar's fast in Arizona and the Proposition 22 Campaign. There are literally hundreds of UFW volunteers who are only "names" to me, sent forward by others. As of today, the documentation master lists counts 883 former UFW volunteers and several hundred of those are on the list without any contact address and another hundred or so are listed as deceased.

You ask specifically about Salvador Bustamante and Sabino Lopez. On the master list there is a Salvador "Chava" Bustamante with an email address. I checked to see if he is also enrolled in this online discussion group and he is. If these two names are the person you are asking about, then the answer is YES.

There is no Sabino Lopez listed in the documentation project. There will be when I close out this posting because I will add the name and put your name in parenthesis along side his in the hope that some day you (or someone else) will provide me with a contact address.

Mike, I hope this posting is responsive to your question. But before I close, let me say again how much I enjoyed your very insightful (and important) essay about the relationship between Cesar and his farmworker movement and the Latino progressive/ reformist leadership in the Salinas and Central Valley Teamster's union. This is an aspect of Cesar's legacy that only a very few people are in a position to understand, appreciate and write about.

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/31/04 (2)

RE: Memorial Day

Thanks Kate, for the reminder. Bob was from Ohio. Lupe and I went to his memorial service and thanked the family for his service to the NFWHG. (We were in Cleveland working on the boycott). And there were others. I recall a legal secty in the early days who use to commute from Ventura County. She was killed en route to Delano when she pulled over to the side of the road in her VW. A semi swept her life away. Fwy 126 was treacherous in those days. There are the martyrs and those who have slipped away quietly. I recall in "73" Marshall asking me to go to the hospital where they had taken Juan de la Cruz. I met Maximina at Kern General as he had been transferred there. I translated for Maximina the doctor's words that Juan had died. Her grief was deep. We went upstairs, where he was lying and she talked to him.

That was so many years ago. As Ever, Kathy Murguia

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/31/04 (2)

RE: Paid Reps

Marshall,

Cesar did not “crush” the farm worker “leadership within the union”. You maintain: those “within the union who had the guts to run their own candidates for the board” at the convention. You make it sound as though the *only* leadership the union had came from Salinas, from that small group “*grupito*”. There is great error in this assertion, Marshal. Leadership in the union was found throughout the state(s) not only Salinas. The slate that was elected at the convention was well-known, respected, but above all, trusted by the delegates representing the majority of farm workers throughout the state. That was the *leadership* that cast the vote. (The same voting representation dynamics in place at the convention, I might add, that got you elected to the board in the past). The mistake committed by the Salinas *grupito* (the puppets from Salinas you so fiercely defend) was assuming that farm workers agreed with their agenda. They certainly were out of touch with the rest of the workers throughout the state(s). Give the farm worker delegates i.e. leadership present that day the dignity they deserve for the decisions they made that day. Otherwise, I would hate to infer from this that you might think farm workers (many of them Mexicans) might not have been smart enough to vote for their own Executive Board. I know the farm workers in San Ysidro, including my father-in-law, were mighty pleased with those elected. Also, I cannot conceive of Cesar being fearful of anything as you claim. He would have started all over again somewhere else, is my belief. If you want to blame anyone for that not getting elected blame the delegates. By the way, do not pad your comments with innuendos of “scapegoating” and anti-semitism.” Flesh it out for me, please. I do not believe a person could hate a religion and then enter its place of worship; I know that Cesar attended Temple countless times. I only knew Cesar to have the utmost respect for all people, races and religions. I am not a Catholic nor have I ever been one, yet he was always respectful toward me. sin mas, abby/ richgrove/ delano

Wren Bradley, 5/31/04

RE: Memorial Day

Kate, that was Bob Saunders and not only was he in Sanger, he was in the Salinas clinic when I was there and then he went to La Paz where he died. wRen Bradley

Elaine Elinson, 5/31/04

RE: Memorial Day/ Naji Daifullah

Thank you, Kate, for reminding us that on Memorial Day, in this year of great death and devastation in Iraq, we have many fallen heroes and heroines to celebrate and remember.

I have been thinking a lot about Naji Daifullah, especially when I hear the funeral cries from the streets of Baghdad and Afghanistan, “Alla Akhbar.” I first heard this rhythmic prayer at his funeral march in Delano.

I am sure that many of you knew him much better than I, but I have a very distinct memory of when I first met him. I was on a picket line near Delano and remember Gil Padilla telling us that the growers were bringing in workers from Yemen as strikebreakers. We were shocked that the growers would rather spend the money to bring workers from half-way around the world, rather than pay fair wages and provide decent working conditions for the farmworkers who had gone on strike. Of course, the growers assumed the Yemeni workers would be immune from appeals from the UFW strikers – not only could they not understand English or Spanish, but where would they go if they walked out on strike, how would they ever get back home.

The picket captains still encouraged us to keep up the chants, the pleas for solidarity and the waving of the UFW flag to try to appeal to the Yemeni workers. One afternoon, Mary Bernier called me over to a car some distance from the picket line. Rudy Reyes was in the car with a young Yemeni worker, Naji Daifullah. Somehow, he had convinced him to join the strike.

I remember riding back to the Filipino Hall in the back seat of that car with Mary and some other volunteers. It was stifling in the car, and we were all dusty and thirsty. I think Rudy was driving. I sat behind Naji, who leaned his head against the window and sang an Arabic song in a low, sad voice. He must have been wondering if he had made the right choice.

I believe Naji became a key organizer in explaining the strike and boycott to the Arab workers. Only a few years later, while on another picket line, Naji was killed by a deputy sheriff who fractured his skull with a heavy flashlight. The deputy robbed the UFW of a true international workers' activist.

I was not at Naji's funeral in person. I only saw it in "Fighting for Our Lives," which I showed on a daily basis in London as part of the European Grape Boycott. But the Muslim prayers in his honor ringing out through the vineyards of the San Joaquin Valley continue to haunt me, as does his quiet song in the car, and funeral prayers for the dead in Iraq.

Elaine Elinson
1968-69; 1973-76 London, Sweden, Delano, New York

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/31/04 (3)

RE: Paid Reps

[Kathy Lynch Murguia wrote: "*The one big one for me, which I wrote about in my essay, had to do with being told that Ana had 48 hrs to leave La Paz, which was then our home. Who in the @+x can tell a parent that their kid can't stay in their home, unless they are removed by some kind of law enforcement for a crime.*"]

Oh, my gosh. That seemed drastic. I mean, after all, that was her home. Now I understand what you meant. * * * * sin mas, abby.

Abby Flores Rivera, 5/31/04 (4)

RE: Memorial Day/ Naji Daifullah

Elaine, Thank you. You have captured a priceless jewel in time. God puts us in places sometimes to capture blessings like this one to share with others at just the right time. What a moving recollection and a wonderful way to remember Nagi. abby/ richgrove/ delano

Kate Colwell, 5/31/04 (2)

RE: Memorial Day/ Naji Daifullah

Elaine:

How precious that each of us can share different memories; memorials to suffering and injustice in the world!

I never knew Nagi, but knew a time when Yemeni workers trusted the Union and used the Rodrigo Terronez (another who passed on) Clinic in Delano. Throughout my years in health care I have always been aware of having seen so many things in Delano that my classmates in the first world will never see. The Yemeni farmworkers came to the clinic with Schistosomiasis. A parasitic snail disease, unheard of in this country, they were infected when they swam or bathed or gathered water in infected water in Yemen. They came to us with blood in their urine. This was so common that Dr. Dan Murphy had to apply to the FDA to use an experimental drug that wasn't approved in the US because, of course, no one in the US could have schisto. Throughout all this discussion of what did or did not go well with the Union, remember that we had faith and we tried, and that's better than despair.

This sharing of memories is very precious to me.

Si se puede.

Kate Colwell

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 5/31/04 (3)

RE: Memorial Day/ Naji Daifullah

Elaine; thank you for recalling that meeting with Nagi, and also your reflections on current events in the Middle East. There are other parallels with Iraq in Nagi's death...

Years after his son's death, Nagi's father continued to have contact with Cesar. He had difficulty understanding how Nagi died. The inquest, I believe, was inconclusive regarding the murder. What was seen by strikers was the blow to the back of Nagi's skull by the Sheriff's flashlight. As I recall this was ruled not to be the cause of death. I believe we argued the "thin skull theory". Cesar asked me to write back to Mr. Daifullah who still pursued the question. "How did my son die?" I went to the Kern County Clerks and located the autopsy report. I read it and learned that he died from a blunt flat blow to the side of his head. His brain went crashing to the opposite side of his skull. He died in custody, while barely conscious from having been beaten and dragged down the street to the cruiser. It was a flat fisted punch to his skull. It was the deputy on his right that produced the fatal blow. I told Mr. Daifullah that his son had died while in the custody of the Kern County Sheriff's Department.

.....a petal dropped from life's bouquet that day, the bouquet remained beautiful, but it wasn't the same. kathy murguia