

**UFW DOCUMENTATION PROJECT
ONLINE DISCUSSION
October 2004**

Patty Park (Proctor), 10/3/04

RE: The Boycott

Hi all:

As we are getting to the end of our conversations – I understand that the list serve is to end at the end of December - I would like to hear a little bit more about boycott experiences. For the record.

Many volunteers were recruited to the union as a result of the boycott and many strikers were also boycotters. While I think the California experience is absolutely fundamental to an understanding of the union a lot of people joined the union via the boycott in whatever community they lived in.

An interesting case in point is Arturo Rodriquez who was recruited in Detroit in about 1973. Along with others like Sam Baca they were part of the graduating MSW class at University of Michigan, in Ann Arbor. Others like David Martinez joined full time in Detroit but were already "recruited" to La Causa without the boycott.

For me I became involved in Toronto, Canada. I was active in human rights work in the labour movement and in Canadian anti war activities with draft dodgers and deserters. I was working for the Jewish Labour Committee in 1966 and one of my Jewish Labour Committee members the Member of Parliament from Winnipeg North, in Manitoba, Canada, David Orlikow, called me on a Friday and said I hear there are farmworkers in Toronto from California why don't you go an check it out. I met Marshall Ganz and Jessica Govea at the Labour Lyceum and became involved.

I think the UFW appealed to me because it embodied all the human rights principles I cared about, it was committed to non violence and the end game was the practical economic tool of a union that would bring justice and a voice to farmworkers. It also gave me something very concrete to do.

Marion Moses had been in Toronto the year before -- but I missed her stay -- she came to boycott one of the wine grapes growers. After Marshall and Jessica I met Jerry and Juanita Brown, Hub Segur and Manuel Rivera and his family all sent from California to lead the Toronto boycott. By 1972 I was a \$5 a weeker in La Paz and then in Detroit. I left the union in 1975 to return to Canada after my father died.

I met Cesar on a trip he made to Toronto. I did some advance work for his trip and thanks to Terry Meagher of the Ontario Federation of Labour accompanied his for the labour federation during his stay. Cesar inspired me as the personification of the values of the UFW but so did the strikers and organizers I met. Initially they were the union for me.

I think a lot of us spent as much or more time on the boycott as in La Paz or in California. Many may not have spent anytime in California. To me, at any rate, one of the most significant accomplishments of the union was how it engaged such a diverse group of people. The boycott was a huge part of making that possible. I think we can learn from our experiences in terms of building and organizing today.

Any stories about how the boycott organized you.

Patty Park Proctor – Gores Landing, Ontario, Canada

LeRoy Chatfield, 10/3/04

RE: I SECOND PATTY'S MOTION

Greetings,

* * * *

Second, I very much agree with Patty Park's suggestion: the documentation project needs to hear more from those volunteers who were recruited by the boycott, many of whom never came to California, or if so, only for a brief blizzard-like campaign of some sort.

The success of the boycott played such an important role in the farmworker movement, we really need to hear from those boycotters. There are many dozens of such boycotters enrolled in the online discussion, so please give it serious consideration. We would like to hear from you.

Many thanks,

LeRoy (Chatfield)

P.S. Thanks to Jerry Brown, Marc Coleman got squared away with housing in Ontario.

Hugh "Hawkeye" Tague, 10/5/04

RE: Hawkeye Boycott Stories #1

In 1971 I graduated from Germantown High School in Philadelphia. This was Bill Cosby's alma mater. He was one of the first Blacks to go there. I was one of the last Whites. It was a short school day because after the third student got killed at lunch time (with a sharpened umbrella point) they eliminated lunch periods, study halls, and anything else except classes. I had a full-time job through most of high school and worked 60-70 hours in the summer. A radical priest (who later married one of the neighborhood girls) ran TOGETHERNESS HOUSE where we all got along real well. It was the only place where there were dances without anybody having to go to Germantown hospital. There was draft counseling which was important because my high schools, both Germantown and Cardinal Dougherty, which I was expelled from for political organizing sent a lot of graduates and drop outs to Viet Nam.

Richie Ross of the Philly Boycott Office spoke at the TOGETHERNESS HOUSE one night after showing the Grapes of Wrath. I signed up to picket stores in the area. It was great! Almost nobody crossed the picket line because they were union folks or liberals /radicals who were living in Germantown because it was integrated.

I agreed to work on the boycott "for the summer." The boycott house was in the Kensington section of North Philly. My parents didn't like the location because it was well known as the area where white people bought their heroin. We used to picket at the produce terminal every morning. This was a weird experience for me because Mayor Tate had ordered the labor squad of the police department to protect us from the produce dealers who were throwing fruit at us. I had never had the cops on my side before.

We had a march and sit-in in Upper Darby (a western suburb) against Hueblein (Italian Swiss Colony Wines, etc.) I got arrested with some Quakers. My cousin was a cop at that station and his fellow officers gave him a real hard time about it, especially since I was a long-haired hippie with a huge afro. He still brings it up at family funerals and weddings.

About this time we heard that the Atlanta Boycott people had their car shot up at the Southeastern Produce Terminal. I pushed to get transferred down there. My parents didn't like the idea because they were hoping that I would go to college. Nobody in my father's big family had been to college. So I headed South on a sour note.

The Atlanta Boycott people were a great bunch, and included Dave Sink the sailor who looked a pirate and walked like he was on a swaying boat. More later.

Fraternally Hugh "Hawkeye" Tague 1971-1976 Philly-Atlanta-Florida-Ohio-CA

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/5/04

RE: Boycott Experiences

"Hawkeye" wrote:

"About this time we heard that the Atlanta Boycott people had their car shot up at the Southeastern Produce Terminal. I pushed to get transferred down there."

"One of the last whites" high school student, counseled to draft dodge, getting arrested, hanging out in drug infested areas, not getting egged but veggied, having your hair way out there, then getting transferred to be where they were shooting at cars...you are a mom's worst problem child... but which make for the best boycotters ever.

Great story and waiting for part two; you know, kinda like Chucky. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/6/04

RE: Was it really LeRoy's doing?

Dear Doug and All:

One of your more recent e-mails, Doug, you stated:

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

Even though it has been days since I read this e-mail, I keep coming back to read this part. It stirred something in me and it took me a while to understand why. I, too, remember what some of us thought of LeRoy during this time. I remember farm workers being respectful and in awe of having a former priest in our midst. I truly believe many found it difficult to separate the former priest from the union volunteer. Many treated him as a priest even in his new role. It was not uncommon to say LeRoy, "el que antes fue padrecito" (the one who was a priest" in the diminutive as a way of showing affection as well as respect) almost in hushed tones. I believe it's part of a Catholic's relationship with their church priest. There was a certain amount of respect for LeRoy because he was a likable person, too. However, I believe that farm worker's expression of their faith came from within from years of practicing their faith as devoted Catholics and not the other way around. As much as they cared for LeRoy, they would have been the same even if he had been absent in the struggle.

If I remember correctly, the Saludados and Cadenas were one of the first group of farm workers to ask Cesar at the beginning of the strike if they could hold vigils. From the beginning Catholic farm workers wanted to express their deep convictions through their faith because it was something they understood and valued. Later, the masses and all that surrounded Cesar's first fast, in my opinion, came from the hearts of the Catholic members who were shaken to learn that Cesar was fasting for non-violence. What do you do when you learn someone is fasting? What do you do if it is your leader? As a Catholic, you pray for that person. My Dad never attended these masses but I did to accompany my friends and to learn how Cesar was doing. (Had I had my father-in-law then, you would have seen him there every day on his knees praying for hours.) There were so many people there and the spirit at these masses was so sad you might have thought you were at a wake. The longer Cesar fasted, the more people gathered and went to great lengths to display their concern for him.

I doubt seriously that LeRoy or anyone else could have orchestrated that which is perhaps why sometimes it did almost take on a life of its own. If anyone would have suggested the masses stop, I believe you would have had a riot on your hands. No. This natural display of religious concern came from the sincere hearts of the workers who loved Cesar gathered to pray that the Lord keep him safe and spare him because many believed he would die if he did not end his fast soon. How could anyone fast for so long and live? There was no Savanarola pushing anyone to do anything. The only one telling us to do anything was Cesar who was asking us to stop using violence. There had to be some order during these masses so I guess that is where LeRoy and others stepped in. Of course, it was worthy of being reported in the Malcriado so the entire world and those who cared about our movement and Cesar could stay informed on his progress.

I doubt LeRoy could have steered a Protestant away from much because you know how we only listen to that small still voice; and, besides, don't you know that we aren't ones to have "fun" anyway? And the "commies" well, they're a hardy bunch. The revolucionarios? Hey, don't forget it was the *Grito de Dolores* given by Padre Hidalgo that got them going. Was this history repeating itself maybe?

I think that when it came to religion, a lot of people needed to lighten up. Why would anyone want Catholics to stop being who they were? It was unheard to practice your faith in a union setting but who said we couldn't just because it wasn't done? Camacho was a friend of my Dad's and I never could understand why his friend seemed bitter. My Dad never told me but now I understand part of it from all that you have written. Camacho fought a losing battle against keeping the Catholic religion out of the union but did you know that he found his own religion in the union? Go figure. Camacho died in peace, a happy man, and my father his friend to the end.

I am amazed at everything Cesar had to contend with. Whew! It's tiresome; can you imagine what it must have been for him? sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

Doug Adair, 10/7/04

RE: Was it really LeRoy's doing?

In a message dated 10/7/04 . . . [Abby Flores Rivera] writes:

Camacho fought a losing battle against keeping the Catholic religion out of the union but did you know that he found his own religion in the union? Go figure.

Dear Abby and all,

First of all, apologies to LeRoy for my demonizing him (you). His (your) contributions to the struggle were tremendous, and I credit the Medical Plan to your hard work (and Cesar's inspiration).... but some of us did identify you with the ideal of a more authoritarian, hierarchical, Catholic oriented vision.... and thought you had come to Delano with that "agenda."

My own Protestant religious inclinations became modified by my experience in Delano, and like others I "found my religion in the union." I found inspiration in the Catholic Worker philosophy, and participated in many of the masses and religious aspects of rallies and events, especially comfortable with "rebel" priests like Mark Day. (My own Episcopal Church in Delano was oblivious to the suffering of farm workers, and resolutely turned its back on the injustices; I went once). But I also respected the views of folks like Camacho and Tony Orendain who resisted the increasing identification of the union with the Catholic Church.

There was definitely a religious and spiritual aspect to our struggle, and it was natural to incorporate religious rites and manifestations in our gatherings. We were a movement, much more than just a union... and the majority of members were Catholic, of varying intensities.... so a balance had to be found to respect the spiritual views of the majority, while respecting the minorities. I felt the March to Sacramento, incorporating local Protestant leaders and ministers in many/most of the rallies, along with Masses, worked pretty well.

The first Fast in 1968 mobilized the prayers and spiritual energy of thousands, tens of thousands of farm workers, focused on Cesar, and I think that spiritual energy empowered him and us to move forward in that critical year. However, I feel that the union that emerged after the Fast was more Catholic, and less democratic, in its internal structure. Cesar's moral stature was tremendously increased, in the nation and throughout the world, and certainly in the farm worker community, Catholic, Protestant, atheist, among all..... but the vision of a team of brothers, working together for the common vision, seemed modified to a more Cesar-oriented focus, the Father of the Union, and his vision, and his followers...

I also feel the Catholic Church, after refusing to endorse the strike or boycott and remaining "neutral" in our struggle for justice, has shamelessly exploited Cesar's sincere Catholicism to reposition itself in the barrios as the friend of the campesino. In 1965, the Catholic Church, like the Episcopal Church in Delano, had turned its back on the injustices in the fields. It was losing

member and the youth of the barrios. The half dozen rebel priests in California, and Fr. Vizzard and Saladini and Msgr. Higgins in the nation were voices in the wilderness...Now Cardinal Mahoney poses with Helen and members of the Chavez family in his multi-million dollar Cathedral, and gives a little mild support for immigrants and legislation, while his fellow Bishops threaten to ex-communicate John Kerry for supporting a woman's right to family planning.

I guess I'm a little sour this morning. But whatever his "agenda," LeRoy's positive contributions to our struggle were significant and enduring...

Viva la causa,

Doug Adair
El Malcriado, 1965-70

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/7/04

RE: Was it really LeRoy's doing?

Dear Doug:

I agree with your point (*"I also feel the Catholic Church, after refusing to endorse the strike or boycott and remaining "neutral" in our struggle for justice, has shamelessly exploited Cesar's sincere Catholicism to reposition itself in the barrios as the friend of the campesino."*.)

It rubs me the wrong way to see it now and wish it would have taken place back at the beginning. I guess you can say farm workers are a forgiving people and practice what is preached and that is good. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Richard Ybarra, 10/10/04

RE: Minnie Ybarra

REQUEST FOR PRAYERS

Many of you know and worked with our mother...she is in intensive care at Mercy Hospital in San Diego....thanks

Alberto Escalante, 10/10/04

RE: A new entry into the middle class of American voters....

Sisters and Brothers,

It's been about a week or more since I last posted a message or memory on the Document Project. And what I want to convey to all of those who haven't seen or been in contact with the farmworker community in the last 5 or 10 years is that because of all of the hard work and struggle for just wages and decent working conditions that we all were involved in back in the 60's-70's-80's and 90's The life of the farmworker has undergone some remarkable and startling changes! The most noticeable being that today the average farmworker families here in the Oxnard area are living in a large \$150,000 to \$400,000 multi-bedroom dwellings and have at least 1 or more cars that are less than 3 years old. And although the children of this "last" generation of Mexican farmworkers have by in large chosen not to follow their parents and work in the fields, many have instead decided to go to a Community College, transferring to a State College or University hoping to insure for themselves a brighter future than ever before. Still, most will be paying for part of their tuition with monies earned while working in the fields on the weekends and summertime. Which is a rather sad reflection on the dramatic cutbacks in affirmative action, Cal Grants, Scholarships and Financial aid that in my college days were almost taken for granted, a ripe fruit there for the picking...Now, though those monies have been so scaled back and requirements so stringent that many kids barely manage to qualify for a mere pittance, the majority of their college funding is from money earned working at a job supplied by the schools financial aid office. For those that choose not to go on to college after graduation, the majority of them will continue living at home and working in light manufacturing jobs or industry or some sort of retail sales or office work to help their parents with the monthly payments that the family must come up with each month.

Because living the American dream is pretty expensive usually in the neighborhood of \$1500 to \$2500 or more a month in house payments alone, another \$500 or more for food, \$300 for household utilities, vehicle payments of from \$450 to \$600 a month. Then add payments of \$300 or so a month for household appliances & school clothes for the younger kids in the family. And what you get is a financial portrait of a family that has to work each & every day just to keep from going into bankruptcy. Just like the rest of the middle class Americans! Yet to talk with these people who finally have achieved their goal of buying, rather than renting like they had done for so many years, is to see and talk to people with real hope for their future. And, this year will be the first year that many of them will be able to vote, thanks to the various amnesty acts and programs of the last 10 years or so. Come Nov. 2nd these same farmworkers will share the ultimate reality of those who live in a democracy, the ability to choose and vote for who they want to be their representatives in government. Sadly, though I see a clear shift to the political right for many of these same folks who only a few years ago all proudly displayed pictures of John F. Kennedy Robert F. Kennedy, the Pope and Cesar somewhere in their house...Today those pictures have all but disappeared. While compiling my lists of how the various households that I've been assigned to visit are thinking of voting, I've run into some familiar faces. Some of the people who I've talked to lately are people who I first met while organizing in the fields around Oxnard some 30 years ago. These people still feel that the UFW was an important movement and it helped emancipate" the campesinos of their generation so that they could actually participate in the American dream that they'd always felt alienated from. They also acknowledged the importance of all those years of strife, strikes, and Boycotts. But there are also some who have said that there came a point sometime in the 1980's when they felt as if they'd been left behind by a Union who no longer was interested in the progressive politics of change and it appeared to them as if the glory days of "Si Se Puede" and "Viva La Union!" had somehow shifted emphasis & that the UFW no longer seemed to want to enfranchise the workers who they'd promised to someday represent. And then with great pride these same workers will tell me "See all of this?" meaning their material gains of property and social status. "All this I had to get on my own! Why did the Union stop organizing and winning contracts just when we were at our most united point in time and ready to realize all that we'd talked about for so many years?" And no matter how much I tried to explain that Cesar hadn't forgotten them, but that he had been tied up in some huge lawsuits up until the day his body finally just gave out & he died. I told them that the Union had been betrayed by the Republican Legislators and The California Farm Bureau, who were using the very same ALRB Farmworker Law that Cesar had fought so hard to establish to undermine the UFW's efforts to reach out to all of those farmworkers who were feeling so abandoned and on their own. "But why didn't the Union keep on holding Rallies and Juntas like before?" he then asked. "Before what?" I wanted to know..."Before we made them rich, and they didn't need us anymore!" He answered almost as if he was finally purging himself of a deep sorrow or pain he'd carried around until he'd finally met someone who he felt might be able to answer his hurt and angry feelings of betrayal. "No....", I tried to reassure him "Believe me, because when he died Cesar was carrying the pain of not having been able to accomplish everything he had lived and worked his entire adult life for, over 40 years of working hard to make sure that someday..., You would be able to stand here on your own property, not some cardboard shack, or ramshackle housing you're forced to rent from your boss! And you will someday be able to see your kids go to & graduate from college and they will then be able to earn a very good living working with their minds not their backs, like us! And, if they do chose to work as you do in the fields, they can now earn a decent wage, enough to live on and save a little for their future. With safe working conditions and all of the benefits that you worked so hard to have! No my friend" I told him "Cesar never, ever abandoned you. Because although he wasn't able to come around as often as before, he had given you and your family a brighter future & the dignity that all men deserve, yet something that the Patrones tried to deny you by treating you the way they treated you before the UFW showed you that you had the power and the right to be treated like a real man, and not be treated like some farm animal. Cesar opened wide the door to your future, when you came to him with your hat in your hands he told you, you have to be strong & never give up! Because he told you that someday you would be where you are now. When you are about to vote for the next President of the United States. Where you now live and own your house. No, amigo, el senor Chavez nunca nos olvido. Y jamas nunca nos vamos a olvidar de el..!" (No my friend Mr. Chavez never forgot us. And we will never forget him..!")

And I explained to him that the upcoming election will be one of the most critical moments in history...We will decide on November 2nd if we continue the politics of fear and destruction or we elect a new President, one who has promised to work with the other nations of the world so we can share in the rebuilding of Iraq and get out of this war. I even gave him my "Kerry-Edwards" button that I had on. And he showed me a button that I'd given him in 1975. A simple red button with a black UFW eagle on top of an X'ed-out box that said "VOTA ASI!" I remember designing that button for Artie Rodriguez when he'd said "Alberto, make me something up quick & simple that I can use as an example when I go up to El Taller Grafico. They need some new ideas for some new badges....." A circle has no beginning or no end.....

Knocking on a door somewhere in California,

Alberto Escalante Vote for John Kerry- John Edwards in 2004!

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/12/04

RE: Minnie Ybarra: A Good Friend to Farm Workers

Hello Richard and All:

I just learned Minnie is out of the hospital and doing better. That is good news. A few days back before Minnie took ill, my husband and I were reminiscing about San Ysidro and the Field Office. Minnie worked there when we were assigned there immediately after we were married. The workers held Minnie in high esteem. I know every time my father-in-law went to the office he made sure he took a gift of fruit, sweets or pastries for la Sra. Ybarra. To him it would have been an insult of the worst kind to show up empty-handed because he felt she did so much for everyone. This was a small token of appreciation and the best way he felt he could express his gratitude. She was always gracious and in return never insulted him or anyone else who did the same (because there were many others) by refusing these thoughtful gestures. That is what made Minnie special. She understood people, especially the poor.

Whenever we go to San Diego or to Tijuana to visit friends and relatives or vice-versa they ask about Minnie. She was a friendly, helpful person who became a friend to all. Any news we can share about her is eagerly received. One thing everyone has always commented is how tall she is and for some reason that gives our friends the impression that she is strong. Not physically but emotionally. That she can tackle any problem so to speak. That has always made me smile because I guess they are right to a point. Minnie is a strong person whose desire to help farm workers was always unwavering. She comes from a large family so it almost goes without saying that she learned to be resilient at a young age. She is also realistic. There is a no nonsense attitude about her and the way she approaches work and life. She's a good friend even when friends disappoint because she has a spiritual side that is forgiving and understanding. She has done a marvelous job instilling these and other values in her sons which is evident in the work they do for others. Minnie, I am glad you are doing better. You hang in there lady and we want to read your essay contribution to this Project. You have so much to contribute. sin mas, abby/ r/d/l/ and L.A.

Andy Imutan, 10/13/04

RE: LeRoy Chatfield

Dear all,

After reading all the comments about LeRoy, I thought I should say something about LeRoy too. I honestly believe that LeRoy contributed quite a lot to the formation of the UFWOC, AFL- CIO. he had unselfishly devoted his life to it and gave Cesar full loyalty, respect and priority in almost everything he did at that time. I truly think he is one among the very few close aides of Cesar that was responsible in making Cesar a national figure. LeRoy was everywhere, either negotiating, heading the boycott, establishing the clinics, contacting heads of food stores, raising funds for the union, running errands for Cesar and the executive board, and participated in brainstorming positive ideas for the union. He supported Cesar completely and whole heartedly. He was Cesar's confidante and very close friend. Cesar trusted LeRoy. I think we should give LeRoy full credit for

his role in the farm worker's struggle for recognition. This is only a very short evaluation of LeRoy Chatfield. Viva!

Andy Imutan, Delano, Coachella, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., New York, Delano, Stockton and Delano, 1965-73

Alberto Escalante, 10/14/04

RE: LeRoy Chatfield and Rudy Ahumada

In a message dated 10/13/2004 . . . [Andy Imutan] writes:

I think we should give LeRoy full credit for his role in the farm worker's struggle for recognition.

I concur, wholeheartedly! When I first came on, Leroy Chatfield and Rudy Ahumada had just left. They had gone to work in Sacramento directly for Gov. Jerry Brown. Just knowing that they were up there working at the Capital Rotunda gave the movement the sense of being an intrinsic part of all of the changes that were taking place. Not just having to settle for whatever scraps of bread they'd decided to throw us! Having Leroy & Rudy their at Jerry's side we knew that they would do their jobs in a proper unbiased manner which was all Cesar had ever asked for... "A level playing field... nothing more!" Still whenever their names came up a certain hushed reverence would settle over the discussion, as if they represented a new era when the people finally had a real voice and a direct line to the highest state office in California. I had known the Ahumada family from my very first days with the UFW. I met Paul Ahumada & his Ta-Ta when they had been sent to Oxnard from Delano by Ben (Teddy Bear) Maddocks who I eventually met and came to really like, sort of like a big brother, always there to talk to. I met Rudy Ahumada one night standing guard for CEC when they were busy negotiating the final language of the ALRA. When I asked him how long he had worked for the Union he told me that when he first came to work for the Union it was really hard commenting "We had no money, no cars, no housing, nothing! We never even had 'regular meals' even Marshall was much thinner because of all the work we had to do and no money for food we were always hungry... But, that made us even more committed!" he continued, "Now I'm making so much money I feel guilty cashing my checks, until I think back to my days working for the Union... then I can say to myself "Hey I earned this money, it's mine!" I've heard that same reaction from more than one person who finally, after years of living off of the receipts they turned in for reimbursement each week and all of the free food they could "hustle", finally cashed a "real" check... And they'd just stand there transfixed "Wow! this is SOOO much money, what will I do with SO MUCH MONEY?" And as far as recognition for LeRoy Chatfield his crown has so many jewels on it & his service to his to the poor and oppressed is legendary. He is our Quetzalcoat! I only wish more people were as true and good as LeRoy Chatfield... Oh, what a wonderful world this old planet would be.

Alberto Escalante Take a person or two with you to vote on Nov. 2nd. Talk with all of your compatriots and everyone else you see. Tell them to vote for KERRY on election day!

Alberto Escalante, 10/19/04

RE: On Oct. 16, 2004 we gathered at La Paz to honor Lupe Murguia

Hermanas y Hermanos,

On Oct. 16th, 2004 I returned to La Paz after a 17 year absence. My wife Susan and I went for Lupe Murguia's retirement party. Lupe is a modest, soft spoken man who has spent the last 40 plus years of his life working in various capacities within "la causa." In doing so he had become one of the true heroes of the UFW movement. And yet he is someone who has never sought the rewards nor the recognition for the incredible legacy of good works he had quietly accomplished. And so, on a quiet evening in October, Lupe Murguia was retiring, after spending long and faithful years working in the background, compiling a lifetime of service to "la causa." Doing whatever was needed, quietly working to insure farm workers would someday achieve the respect, dignity and justice they deserved. Because of his tireless devotion and dedication, Lupe Murguia, who's a gentle, quiet & humble man, with a heart of gold & a love for all of humanity, became a true giant of the movement. A man who had dedicated his entire life working for the good of others. He said

that it was by helping others that he was fulfilling his commitment to God. And what a life he has had. He was one of the very first to follow the path set forth by his good friend Cesar Chavez, who considered Lupe Murguia a friend and true confidant. Lupe was arrested almost 40 times during various UFW nonviolent protests to end the unjust ways farm workers were being treated, and their rights were being denied. Early on, when the fledgling UFW was beginning to make the American public aware of the many cruel & dangerous practices "campesinos" were being subjected to daily. Lupe was arrested, beat up, run over, injured and abused. He never wavered nor did he sway from his steadfast, loyal dedication to the movement and the knowledge that his journey was one of truth, dignity & justice. It was often a difficult, lonely path, one that would have been hard, if not impossible for a normal person to travel alone. Lupe Murguia is an extraordinary person whose deep faith and convictions allowed him to accomplish all he did while successfully raising a beautiful family, with the help of his wonderful and loving wife, Kathy, who has been by his side, and who also deserves to be honored. Now, more than 40 years after he first began helping Cesar organize farm workers and poor people, we had gathered at La Paz to honor this beautiful man of few words but countless acts of faith and good service to his fellow man. A person whose works stand as a testimony of his love of God and his lifetime dedication of helping others. When I saw my friend Lupe again, after so many years, I realized, "Oh oh, I didn't bring him a gift or anything." Thinking fast, I resourcefully gave him the "Unidos con Kerry" button that I'd worn, and he reacted as if I'd given him a Rolex watch! "Look, everybody what my good friend just gave me!" as he proudly showed off his "new" button and introduced me to all those near him. I knew this was Lupe's way of making me feel better, because that's the way he's always been, he's thought of others first! We were told that we were going to begin the evening festivities by catching some glimpses of a younger Lupe Murguia in a viewing of the documentary movie "Fighting For Our Lives!" Every time Lupe's face would appear a cheer would erupt from the people gathered in the newly renovated La Paz screening room, which was once the UFW conference room and on Sundays served as our Chapel. After the film, we were treated to an incredible meal in the La Paz Community Dining Room. Lupe was so happy to be there with his family and so many of his friends and admirers from the past and present. Artie Rodriguez, Paul Chavez and David Villarino served the sumptuous meal in the great Union tradition of the leaders serving the food to the guests. Our Master of Ceremonies for the evening was Richard Chavez, who gave a beautiful and moving tribute to Lupe. Telling us Lupe's story and some personal anecdotes of the man we had gathered to honor for his gentle manner and loyal dedication to the farm worker movement, and for the many years he had spent helping others. Paul Chavez told us of having grown up knowing and working with Lupe, telling us how his father, the late Cesar Chavez had depended on Lupe's quiet demeanor, resolve and counsel to help him through tough times. Paul related to us how Cesar knew he and the UFW could count on Lupe to be there no matter what the situation, and Cesar valued that Lupe wasn't a "yes" man, but a true friend and one who, if he felt something wasn't right or fair, he knew Lupe would tell him about it! Lupe and Kathy's children, all grown now, and parents themselves, got up and told us of growing up in a household where their father was often absent, away on UFW assignments, and yet, one by one, their voices would crack as they tried to fight back tears of emotion and love they felt, so deeply, for their father. All told us how lucky they'd been to have had such remarkable parents as Lupe and Kathy. The youngest daughter emotionally told us about waking up, after having been in a coma (she'd been struck down by a terrible illness that left her paralyzed), the first thing she saw was her fathers kind face. She told us of his determination as he assured her that "Yes, you will walk again", of his many tireless days and nights spent helping her with therapy and the countless sessions helping her exercise her crippled limbs until finally, yes, she was able to walk again. So much love & tenderness from this one man. A couple of the Murguia's closest friends told us of a "love story" so tender and real I felt a lump rise in my throat hearing them talk of two people who were so right for each other, their love has withstood the test of good and bad times. Helen Chavez got up from where she'd been sitting with Kathy and Lupe, and presented him with a plaque of a framed UFW flag signed by the Union Leadership, staff and others like herself who had known him for so many wonderful years. As the plaque pointed out, "for over 40 years of exemplary service." Arturo Rodriguez, head of the United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO, got up and addressed the audience as Lupe's friend and as the President of the UFW. He spoke of Lupe Murguia's unwavering dedication & loyalty to the UFW and "la Causa", and in recognition of the

many years that Lupe Murguia has served the UFW and for his noble and steadfast dedication. Arturo stated he was proud to present Lupe with a "little something to keep you warm when it gets cold", giving him a beautiful black silken jacket with the UFW logo on the left side and embroidered in a row of neat letters on the right side of the jacket the words "UFW Representative", which, as Richard Chavez said, " Is something we only give to someone very, very special, someone like Lupe!" So in closing, let me say that it was an honor for us to be there on a wonderful evening of friendship, peace & joy that had been dedicated to a very special person named Lupe Murguia. A humble man that had dedicated his entire life to "la causa" and to helping the less fortunate. A very special man who was finally getting the recognition for the good that he had done over the years. Although he had never sought or wanted it, he received the praise and honor he so justly deserves.

To my wonder friends, Lupe and Kathy Murguia....

Alberto Escalante

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 10/19/04

RE: Lupe's Retirement

From Kathy Murguia

Last Sat. night there was a retirement party for Lupe at La Paz.(Forty Years of service to La Causa) It was a celebration for some of our old time friends, but mostly it was an event for our family. It's hard to convey the meaning it had for us. It was the first time we had gathered at La Paz as a family since 1978. It was memorable. All the kids and many of the grandchildren were there and had good things to say to Lupe. Paul, Artie, Rudy and Richard remembered Lupe with their stories, and more importantly acknowledged his contribution to La Causa. Lupe listened and a couple times I saw a tear forming in the eye of this tough minded soul. Later he was able to joke with all of us about it. What was interesting was the mixture of the past and the present. From the past, the Winterrowds, the Maganas, the Escalantes, the Chavez family, the Villarinos, Danny Romero, Dolores Velasco, the Delgados among others and from the present the folks Lupe has organized from Tehachapi...people involved in helping people....friends from St. Vincent de Paul, Los Guadalupanos and the Knights of Pythius. The richness of the event was and is a tribute to what we brought to La Causa and what we learned from being a part of this incredible movement.

As my children spoke, I knew that in spite of the pain (yes there was pain and sacrifice), we can be at peace with what we have passed on, and that not only was it "good enough" for them, it has brought them to a higher understanding and compassion for others. In terms of the family of man; of humankind, what more can we hope for. As parents, as part of a movement we tried to make it work. There were moments of despair, but when I heard them speak, all of them Joaquin, Ana, Ricardo, Maria, Mundo, Benito and Sal (Dolores in private), I was at peace, knowing that the choices we made were understood by those we loved. Lupe and I are extremely honored to echo Kahlil Gibran's message re: Our Children....

Your children, are not your our children.... they are the sons and the daughters of life's longing for itself...they come through you, but they are not from you, and though they are with you they belong not to you. You can give them your love but not your thoughts... they have their thoughts. You can house their bodies, but not their souls, for their souls dwell to a place of tomorrow which you cannot visit... not even in your dreams. ..

On behalf of Lupe, our thanks to Pan y Vino (the La Paz kitchen) y a todos que ha hecho esta celebracion posible. Es una memoria que nos dieron a toda mi familia... era un momento para llevar siempre en nuestros corazones. y gracias a nuestra comadre y nina, Helen Chavez

Kathy Y Lupe con 37 yrs. de memories.

Richard Ybarra, 10/20/04

RE: Minnie update

Mom had to go back to Scripps Mercy yesterday * * *. She's as cool as ever with occasional discomfort. * * * * Getting good care and Dr. Moses has spoken to her regularly as well. * * * *

Thanks for the thoughts, wishes and prayers....

Richard Y.

Alberto Escalante, 10/20/04

RE: Minnie update

To the List,

I received this update just this morning. Our beloved Minnie Ybarra needs our prayers and healing thoughts, also a few prayers and words of hope and strength for the family would be wonderful. The Ybarra family has always been there for the "pueblo campesinos" as well as the entire Latino community. We owe them a lot, but some healing words and prayers would be a nice way to let them know how much we love Minnie and her family.

Thank you,

Alberto Escalante

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 10/20/04

RE: Kahlil Gibran corrected

In re-reading my e-mail I realized how off I was in the words of Gibran's writing on Our Children. Since it's one of my favorites I wanted to get it right with all of you. Here it iscorrected version. Sorry. k. murguia

Kahlil Gibran The Prophet
Writings on Marriage and Children

Kahlil Gibran The Prophet
Writings on Children

And a woman who held a babe against her bosom said, Speak to us of Children. And he said:

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life looking for itself. They come through you but not from you, and though they are with you yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts. You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams. You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday. You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth. The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite and He bends you with his might that His arrows may go swift and fat. Let the bending of the Archer's hand be for gladness; for even as He loves the arrow that flies, so He loves also the bow that is stable.

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/20/04

RE: Kahlil Gibran corrected

To Kathy, Alberto, Richard Y, & All:

Escalante's e-mail on Lupe's Retirement Party was an enjoyable read. What a wonderful time you had and Lupe must have felt like the king of the hill Saturday and rightly so, especially when you consider how difficult it is to get an entire family together not to mention friends. I would have loved to hear Richard Chavez speak because he has a way of presenting personal anecdotes in a way that brings lots of smiles and laughter to all. I can just picture Lupe's shy smile. Having to send our regrets was difficult because we would miss seeing all of you, Kathy, but at least I have

caught a glimpse of your special time with your e-mail and also with Escalante's. What a wonderful tribute to a good man, Lupe.

About Minnie, Richard, thank you for the up-date. Let your mom know we are thinking and praying for her to get better. Don't all of you hold back on that incredible Ybarra brother's sense of humor. Laughter is the one thing Minnie thrives on and you guys do an exceptional job of keeping her in good spirits that way. I truly believe Minnie has never seen dark days because she has always had all of you around her keeping her spirits high. Please let he know we are there in spirit, too.

Yes Escalante, The farm workers, America's poor, who had so little gained so much when they joined together to fight for a better life, for dignity, and for self-determination under the black eagle. The workers had themselves as well as others working to advance their cause, such as Lupe Murguia, and Minnie Ybarra. Because of their humble backgrounds, Lupe and Minnie both learned to identify right and wrong. This sense of justice was instilled by their families years before. However, if you ask them what they did to make this world a better place for farm workers they will shy away from all the fuss. They did what needed to be done, day in and day out, and at a great sacrifice to themselves and to their families. Their humility comes from knowing they were not the only ones doing this which speaks volumes to me of the kind of individuals they are. They will credit everyone working together throughout the movement. It is no wonder that Lupe's children cannot find the words to adequately express what is in their hearts. Tears and deep sighing? Well, we certainly can understand all that they signify.

"Seek not to make them like you" is what Kahlil Gibran said to parents. It is a challenge of sorts to us, as children of the movement, that we must do even more than our parents to make this a better world and then to pass the bigger flame forward. sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Alberto Escalante, 10/23/04

RE: "Guest Workers" – A 21st Century Bracero Program!

Sisters and Brothers...During the 3rd and last debate President Bush said he's in favor of starting a "Guest Worker" program, one that would:

- 1.) Help to end the problem of undocumented people, illegally crossing the Border, looking for work.
- 2.) Make sure that American employers aren't breaking the law by hiring people that are here illegally, providing them instead with workers from a government run "Guest Worker" program.
- 3.) Insure that the U.S. job market has a steady source of workers who'll work for minimum wage or less. And they won't cause any problems because if they do, they'll be violating the terms of their "Guest Worker" agreement and will be replaced by another "Guest Worker"

Herr Bush strongly endorses creation of the "Guest Worker" program like most Republicans who feel that it will help to defuse any legislation that attempts to raise the minimum wage for American workers for the next 5-10 years, and eliminate the need to provide for any of the "costly benefits" that organized union workers had to fight many years to get. The so-called "Guest Worker" program will in fact turn back the clock on the working conditions and wages of the American worker. And anyone who thinks this insidious anti-worker scheme is only going to provide low paid, menial workers for the agricultural work force is in for a rude awakening. Yes, it will probably start off in an innocuous, seemingly innocent effort to shore up the need for more farm workers, or service workers for hotels, janitorial work, maintenance & landscape workers at private parks, golf courses and neighborhood associations. These are jobs that are sometimes referred to as the "invisible workforce" because up until just recently they'd never been organized or included as part of the main stream of American workers, often paid on a daily basis or in cash. The "Guest Worker Program" will stop cold any inroads that unions like the SEIU or the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union have been making by organizing in this segment of the work force. Next will be the Trucking, Transportation & Building trades who will feel their wages & working conditions start to fall & their bargaining strength being sapped by the influx of workers from (you guessed it!) the "Guest Worker" program!! When American business owners & employers find out

that they can just replace a worker who is earning a fair living wage with a "Guest Worker" that will work for much less than the prevailing wage, most businesses & employers are going to say "Hallelujah!" And the current employees are less apt to make waves or "costly demands" of their employer or boss if George W gets his way and starts the "Guest Worker" Program in his next term. Which is just another reason to send him packing back home to Crawford, Texas!

Gad-Zooks! Am I the only one to see that this is just another attempt to revive the terrible Bracero Program? Cesar hated to see the way that the Braceros were being treated, almost like animals, making them live in conditions so bad the American public finally made them stop the program. In many cases the workers were "warehoused" in unsafe and unsanitary living conditions, in shacks that were provided by the employer or by a farm labor Contractor, or Contratista, often with the proviso that the workers pay would be deducted by whatever amount they wanted to charge them for room & board. This was a common practice back in the days of the Bracero farm labor camps. Sometimes having to pay their food and housing costs from what they had earned meant that they ended up owing the Boss money! Which of course is just another reason why the rich keep getting richer, and the poor keep getting...Well, you get the picture!

En Solidaridad.....Alberto Escalante

~~Vote for Kerry-Edwards in 2004!! Vote Democrat in 2004!~~

Jerry Kay, 10/23/04

RE: Message from South Phoenix

Dear UFW hermanos y hermanas,

I took off for the last two weeks of the election campaign, left my home, wife and 2 boys in Santa Cruz, Ca. (and the beach where I surf nearly every day) to come to Phoenix, Arizona--a possible swing state—to re-defeat Bush.

Yesterday I went online and looked up "Cesar Chavez, fast, Arizona" and found the name and address of the Santa Rita center where Cesar conducted his 25(?) day fast in 1972 against the Arizona anti-farmworker law. It was not far from the Kerry office, in a weed-strewn, dilapidated neighborhood up against the Phoenix Airport. The center was locked closed, chained and seemed unused.

Yet, it was from this center that the union conducted that campaign, and lost, then-- tried to recall the governor who signed the law, and lost. It was there that I believe Dolores coined the phrase "Si Se Puede" after all the locales said about the effort to overturn the law, and the governor, "no Se Puede." Of course, two years later, the Republican candidate lost and the first Hispanic governor was elected bringing with him a whole new slate of Democrat state legislators.

So it proved that when the people are angry enough, and moved enough by honest, hard-working leadership, they can move mountains.

And so now I find myself in Arizona, in the bastard step-child South section of swaggering Phoenix, where scatterings of barrios and dry desert ghettos with lots of character but up against the new upper middle class and wealthy developments built for cars and consumers but not for gente.

And we hear how Arizona has moved from 15% plurality for Bush, to 10%, to 5% - and now, they say it is a toss-up. Yesterday we printed and began distributing a leaflet that says, "Let's Make It a Landslide!"

It has been 20 years since I have taken to working on a political campaign, because, in truth, I don't like them. But I have found, once again, that it is in the people of the community that I meet, who give selflessly of themselves with great humor and graciousness who keep my spirits up and my energy strong.

And I remember once again, what it feels like to fight the good fight, and to not just say a slogan, but to remember what it feels like in my guts to believe, "Si Se Puede."

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

Ellen Eggers, 10/23/04

RE: Message from South Phoenix

Way to go Jerry! I'm heading to Reno next weekend myself. I wonder how many other ex-UFW staffers are working on the Kerry campaign. I know Fred Ross Jr. is in New Mexico (through SEIU) and that Scott Washburn is also in Arizona. Ellen Eggers (72-87, LA Boycott, La Paz Legal)

Ramón Romero, 10/23/04

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

I'm headed for New Mexico next Thursday to work until election day on the NEA-New Mexico campaign to support Kerry. I hope everyone on the listserv will be doing something to bring a Kerry victory home. Si se puede!

Ramón Romero
1971-74, K.C. & Washington D.C. Boycotts, La Paz

Carlos LeGerrette, 10/23/04

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

The United Domestic Workers are organizing a couple buses (are there two "s"?) for the long weekend in Phoenix. Besides Linda and I (or is it 'me'), (I need the writing assistance of Lynn Anderson and Barbara Tuttle!), Daniel Morales (Agbayani Construction Crew) and AZ UFW field director, will be hopping on. The Ybarra's will be joining unless they have to care for Minnie. Many of you may have heard that Minnie Ybarra has been in and out of the hospital twice in two weeks.

Adelante,

Carlos & Linda LeGerrette
'66-'78

Carlos LeGerrette, 10/23/04

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

Juan "Johnny" Lopez ('72-74 La Paz, Delano), another UFW volunteer from San Diego, is also joining the United Domestic Workers army of Kerry volunteers for the long weekend (Sat-Tues) in Phoenix. The busses leave Friday a.m.

Carlos & Linda LeGerrette
('66-78)

Doug Adair, 10/23/04

RE: "Guest Workers" – A 21st Century Bracero Program!

A long article by former UFW organizer David Bacon, but with history including Cesar's struggles against the Bracero Program, and interview with Eliseo Medina

[Reprint of article by David Bacon, "How US corporations won the debate over immigration," 10/11/04].

Deborah Vollmer, 10/25/04

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

Folks,

Aren't we getting a little off topic here? But since I gather nobody really objects, I might as well mention that I campaigned for Kerry with the Woman's National Democratic Club a week ago

Saturday (10-16) in West Virginia, campaigned with Democratic Party activists from my home county of Montgomery County, Maryland, in Pottstown in Montgomery County Pennsylvania on Saturday, the day before yesterday (10-23), and plan to campaign for Kerry in Ohio this coming Saturday through election day. (A coalition of progressive PACs have organized a caravan of buses from Washington D.C. to Ohio, and from other "safe" parts of the country to other swing States-- but those of you active in the Kerry campaign already know about this, I'm sure.) * * * *

Peace,

Deborah Vollmer ("Debbie")
1973-1976 Legal Department, La Paz and Delano (mostly)

Richard Ybarra, 10/25/04

RE: Minnie update

Alberto,

Thanks again to you and each of our "Huelgo" friends and colleagues for the well wishes, prayers and overall support. On Friday we gave Minnie a bound version of all the e mails that we received for her and to her.... she loved reading them and was pleased to know she had not been forgotten "after all these years."

Update.... when she was released from the hospital she spent two nights with her elder sister (and her very very large family).... now she is resting and recuperating at my cousin's place here in Lemon Grove (the town she was born in and where her father, Juan Gonzalez organized what has become known as the Lemon Grove Incident – 1934 school desegregation boycott and lawsuit)....

Lucinda Chavez (Manuel's widow) is providing great and nutritious natural food and juices for her everyday. Family and friends were visiting with her over the weekend and she looks great (says she will be ready to return to work at the UDW in a few weeks).

* * * * Please forward to our Huelga friends.....

Thanks again for the notes, wishes and prayers...

Richard

p.s. for Fred Jr..... I told her I may have to fire you up for the wonderful words you expressed regarding your dad's thoughts of her.

Alberto Escalante, 10/25/04 (1)

RE: Minnie update

Estimados Hermanas – Y – Hermanos,

Richard Ybarra sent me this latest update about his mother, our dear amiga Minnie Ybarra. Please take a few moments to read it and reflect on her getting stronger and healthier again! If you'd like to do something more, like send her some wonderful healing prayers and thoughts, just remember that miracles do happen, and God does listen. Minnie Ybarra always has helped others, and has never asked for anything for herself. Lets show her how much we love her. Send any personal thoughts or emails to [Richard]. Or else just ask God to deliver your good thoughts and prayers to her direct. I can bear witness to the healing power of prayer.....

Gracias para todo que van hacer para la Sra. Minnie,

Alberto Escalante

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/25/04

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

Debbie,

* * * *

How can these postings on the election tie into the Documentation Project? Well as we can see from the postings, here are the same former UFW volunteers doing what they do best. Working hard for what they believe in. Out campaigning to help Kerry in different parts of the country and doing a hell of a great job. Tenemos callos para este trabajo (We have the stuff (callouses) for this type of work.) Same ol' die hards. We thrive on it! The only thing I can hope to do for Kerry is give people rides to the polls but I sure wish I could go to Arizona. GO KERRY! sin mas, abby/ r/d/lp

Alberto Escalante, 10/25/04 (2)

RE: Campaign for Kerry!

In a message dated 10/25/04 . . . [Abby Flores Rivera] writes:

The only thing I can hope to do for Kerry is give people rides to the polls

That is a great way to do your part even though circumstances don't allow you to go outside of your own neighborhood... (Abby in da 'hood!) We must all dig deep down into our gut and do an assessment of where we can do the most good. For some it's by going to Ohio, for others it's by giving their neighbors Mr. & Mrs. Fulana Natal (John and Jane Q. Public) a ride to their local polling place or helping shut-ins to fill out their absentee ballots. I firmly believe we can all do something to allay our conscience and feel we've done what we could to help win this election. If at the end of the day you can say "I did what I could, in the best possible manner" then you'll come out of this thing without any feelings of .. "Why didn't I just do a little bit more?" Take a moment to look around you. Is there someone who lives near you who would love to do their part, too, but don't drive or are in a wheel chair? Find out from your local Democratic Party Headquarters if you can do some phone calls, walk a precinct or two knocking on doors.... We all know the drill. Having learned it from those two masters of organizing and making sure that the work and vote got out, Cesar Chavez & Fred Ross, Sr. who always told me "You CAN make a difference, all you have to do is say "Si Se Puede!" So, get out there & do your stuff "Chavistas" Do it in honor of Fred Ross, Sr. (Fred Ross, Jr, too!) And for Cesar, who gave his life for us to be able to even have the chance to be a part of this election, and the mainstream American society. If Cesar hadn't worked so hard to change the way we lived, we might have to be working right on up to the day of the election, and we might not even have had the chance to vote because we were working miles away from where we lived, part of the migrant work force. Now we are able to decide the direction of where and how this great country will go.

In Solidarity,

Alberto Escalante

Kathy Lynch Murguia, 10/27/04

RE: The Boys in the White House

Last night on Frontline, Rumsfeld's political history was laid out. Hearing again, the nature and process of the Bush Admin., brought a seething anger and fear that they might get away with it again. CHEERS to all of you in the campaign in the swing states, away from your homes, your surf boards (hey there, Jerry Kay), your families. My feet have been tramping around the precincts in Newark, and parts of San Jose. My work keeps me planted. I believe some of my colleagues with whom I have had a lively debate will now vote for Kerry. Our lunch time discussions over the past three years have had an impact.

When going through some family stuff in preparation for a picture display I made for Lupe's retirement, I came across something Maria had written in high school. A memory flashed going back to when I was explaining to her why we were going to Cleveland on the boycott, why we couldn't bring our dog, why she'd have to leave her "stuff" and tearfully, why she'd have to leave her friends, and.... why "just do what I ask!." Explaining to her that we were volunteers didn't cut it. She said angrily, you're the volunteer, I'm just a kid.

Her words, written years later, helped me feel better about that conversation. It's to all of us, we band of sisters and brothers willing to do what we were asked, go where we were needed and work our hearts out trying to make it happen, and be an example for others.

volunteer, you come from many places,
you volunteers, you have so many faces,
Volunteers, I see you possess time's gifts of knowledge and graces,
volunteer be blessed to serve and mold the spaces,
of my tomorrow

by Mea (Maria Murguia)

Ellen Caffrey Garza, 10/27/04

RE: The Boys in the White House

Hi Leroy and All:

Greetings from Chicago. I saw Frontline last night, too, and I had the same reaction. And I also saw McNamara's interview in The Fog of War; I could barely contain myself. In fact, having lost so many young high school friends in The American War Against Vietnam, mainly during the Tet Offensive, I became painfully aware at a young age of the lies and corruption that is SO evident in this administration's cabal.

Thank you for including me on this listserv; I have been enjoying reading all of the emails throughout the year. It's great to hear how everyone's good work continues. As for me, I will be driving up with some friends to Madison, WI on Saturday to join up with Virginia Rodriguez-Jones, and other union activists who have been up there several months fighting the good fight to send these thieves packing.

To Alberto Escalante: I don't know if we have ever met while working for the UFW, but I just want to tell you that the stories you tell so passionately are appreciated by those of us who have remained friends all these many years. People like Marcos Munoz and Andrea O'Malley Munoz, who live a few miles from me. We had dinner a few weeks ago when Virginia was in town. And Robyn and Charlie March, who live in ME. We have stories of our own that always remind us why it was so important to work with the UFW in those heady days. And, to Hawkeye: your email popping up on the listserv brought a BIG smile to my face. . . .

Well, keep up the good work, all. . . .As many on the list have pointed out, We CAN do this!

Peace,

Ellen Caffrey Garza

UFW Volunteer 1972-77 (NJ Boycott '72, NYC Boycott '73-74, La Paz, briefly (I transferred to Coachella after sitting through one of the Games), Coachella '75, King City '76-77)

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." -Rev Dr Martin Luther King, Jr

Alberto Escalante, 10/27/04

RE: The same struggle as always, for Justice

I love seeing all of the volunteers who are rallying to the so-called battle states & politically important areas helping to ensure a victory for John Kerry. It reminds me of my years as a UFW volunteer when we displayed much of the same tremendous idealism, enthusiasm and the burning urgency to do whatever, whenever and wherever we could to further the cause of the farm workers' right to self-determination. Even knowing that I was often at risk of being injured by those that felt I had no right to be out in the fields exercising my 1st Amendment Right of Freedom of Speech, couldn't keep me from advocating that the farm workers had the same unalienable rights as they or anyone else that resided within the borders of the United States had.

Even after the passage of the historic ALRA / ALRB Legislation of 1975, that guaranteed the farm workers the same basic rights as all of the workers who were covered under the NLRA / NLRB. Still, our opponents had a much different idea of what the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights or any law said as long as we were on "their" property. And, while they had absolutely no right to try to stave off my freedoms and rights, they were determined to try and stop us. And even though they had much more money, and so much hatred & anger I thought it was impossible to have that much hatred and not be in a mental hospital, in the long run we still ended up accomplishing much of what we had set out to do, not all, but quite a lot. Still, I can't believe that was almost 30 years ago! When I was up at La Paz recently at the Retirement party for my fellow Brother "Rabble Rouser and Uppity Mexican" Lupe Murguia, just seeing all of my friends from "the good old days", brought back so many wonderful memories and the feeling that I'd been part of something that had a positive affect on the lives of millions of farmworkers and poor people in California and elsewhere. We'd all lived and worked together sharing in many of the same dreams and aspirations. We'd once been the young men & women of our generation, full of Idealism and Hope, who had been drawn together inexplicably from all over the world by the soft, gentle voice of Cesar Chavez. Who asked us to aspire to free the farm workers from the imprisonment of injustice, poverty & unsafe working conditions? Working to change the world by making it a little better place for everyone to live. We all share an undeniable bond and in the unspoken knowledge that our spirits will forever be joined together as one. The smiling faces I saw and the warm hugs we shared, on October 16th, 2004, were just a little softer than they were 30 years ago, seemingly "mellowed" with age, yet more beautiful and handsome than ever. I tried to fill in the years that had transpired since we'd last been together, or seen one another, and nothing seemed to be as important or real as being together again! And for a brief moment, in time, we were together again, right then and there! I couldn't help but think how much this old world had changed since I had last been with my "UFW Familia" gathered together again that evening in La Paz. For one thing it seemed as if everyone had at least one cell phone a Blueberry or Laptop computer, making communication almost instantaneous. Boy, Cesar would have both loved the technology and gone ballistic seeing our cell phone bills!! Yes, so much has changed and yet, incredible as it may seem, I'm still hearing that same old tired, transparent argument "If they don't like it here, why don't they just go back to where they came from!" The trouble is, the same people who want to send those who don't "deserve" to be here "back to where they came from" are the same people who say they can stay here as long as they work at below minimum wage, without any medical or health care and pay a fortune to live in substandard housing. Go figure!

Born a Democrat, and I'll always be a Democrat!

Alberto Escalante

Larry Tramutola, 10/27/04

RE: The same struggle as always, for Justice

I have been in and out of Colorado doing Kerry field training. I have been pleased to meet MANY former UFW supporters. The volunteer ranks are filled with many people who either are former boycotters or sons and daughters of former activists. Si se puede.-- Larry Tramutola

Patty Park (Proctor), 10/27/04

RE: The Boys in the White House

Que Viva to everyone who is working on the campaign. Here in Canada we watch the baseball and the war. We will work to keep our government honest so there are no more members of the willing.

Kathy I am not sure that you will remember me but I do remember the Murguias. You were the family we heard about who were looking after La Paz before it became the "headquarters" When I spent my short time there in 1972 and realized how isolated it must have felt without others I thought about what that "assignment" must have been like. I also remember you and other women

working to organize a cooperative child care -- teaching us all lessons about what women in the union needed.

Please pass on my congratulations to Lupe. And of course to the whole family.

Patty Park Proctor

Michael Lacinak, 10/27/04

RE: The Boys in the White House

Checking in from a swing state...Patty, I thought of you and the New Democratic Party and the Toronto Boycott as I was out canvassing in my neighborhood on Saturday. While I learned how to do community organizing from the UFW, I cut my electoral political teeth with the NDP. Every election day we were out working for NDP candidates. The work was all person to person, thorough, and extremely well organized. It was grass roots get out the vote at it's best. It was so much fun to be out on the streets with the NDP on election day.

I remember getting out that last voter for Ross McClellan! I also remember the incredible support the boycott received from the NDP - money, office space, phones, volunteers, etc. And it was so great to work with a political party that embraced organized labor!

As I do canvassing, voter ID, and get out the vote in my own neighborhood it's invigorating this year. I live in the Republican, southern part of the state in Cincinnati, so often it feels difficult to have electoral impact. Also, usually presidential campaigns are more on the air waves than on the streets. This year it's different. It comes down to 2 -3 votes per precinct in Ohio, so it feels possible to make a difference.

As I write, thousands of volunteers are headed to Ohio to join the activists living here for the last few days. Let's keep the faith and keep working!

Michael Lacinak

Toronto Boycott '74-'77La Paz '77-'78

Abby Flores Rivera, 10/28/04

RE: Outside Agitators

Hello All:

Former UFW people and others are traveling out of state to work on the Presidential Campaign and boy are the Republicans upset! There was a news blurb that scrolled at the bottom of my tv screen last night that read that they are complaining that 11-18 year olds are being overworked by the Democrats. They're crying so hard it's been raining for days in California. There was a great piece I heard on the radio this morning, too, about all the homes opening up to volunteers in Florida and how pumped-up fellow Democrats are feeling by having them there.

I recall walking down the street of Delano during the early days of the strike. As I walked past a merchant standing in a doorway he began screaming, "Go back home you outside agitator." I turned around thinking he was yelling at me and then realized he was directing his words at someone a few steps behind me. It was this tall, hippie guy with long hair, in those days a very Haight Ashbury/ San Francisco type, who glanced at the man but didn't say a word back. I didn't know the guy but I had seen him out at our picket lines. It made the merchant even more angry when the guy ignored him that I laughed out loud. He got a double whammy insult and was not too happy. We all know Delano was never the same after the strike started and it was cool seeing the hippie types all around town. Therefore, from personal experience, it is appreciated when people come to your aid from the "outside."

Thanks to all the "outside agitators" who came to our aid in Delano both hippie and non-hippie types. To all the "outside agitators" out in the election campaign, you must be doing everything right if people (Bush looking- types) are complaining about you and want you to leave. Viva! Go Kerry! sin mas/ abby/ r/d/lp

