

Memo from Cruz Reynoso to Cesar Chavez 1970

California Rural Legal Assistance

May 19, 1970

To: Cesar Chavez,

From: Cruz Reynoso

This is to finalize the understanding reached by our representatives in meetings last week. This is, of course, subject to the approval of our Board of Trustees.

1. CRLA will not form nor attempt to form nor advise anyone forming or attempting to form any agricultural worker's union or any agricultural collective bargaining association nor will CRLA negotiate or attempt to negotiate any agreement concerning wages, hours, or working conditions. CRLA recognizes that its function is to serve the rural poor, not as union organizers, advisors, or negotiators but as a law firm concerned with legal matters.
2. In regard to class actions pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, we have the responsibility to insure that (a) the claims or defenses of the representative parties are typical of the claims or defenses of the class, and (b) the representative parties will fairly and adequately protect the interests of the class. Therefore, we recognize a duty to consult with those who may be affected.

In the present controversy, you have brought to our attention that we may not have adequately communicated on these matters in the past. Therefore, with respect to those class matters involving farmwork employment, including:

1. Wages and fringe benefits,
2. Pesticides,
3. Discrimination against union members,
4. Field conditions,
5. Working conditions,
6. Farm pollution problems,
7. Water,
8. Farm labor contractors,
9. Green card and illegal entrant,
10. Agricultural employers and agribusiness,
11. Subsidies,

we will consult with you and other similarly representative groups to obtain your ideas, suggestions, and reactions and discuss any publicity which may result from the action. To effect this I have asked each CRLA directing attorney to consult with you when such class matters arise.

3. CRLA will conduct its June training session for its attorneys and community workers in Bakersfield or Fresno. A representative of UFWOC will be invited to address the conference on matters of concern to both the union and CRLA. As is our normal practice, we will provide our staff with lodging and food expenses.

4. Where it is possible to do outreach lay advocacy, community workers, under CRLA direction, will seek to provide such services utilizing other community facilities and resources.

5. To prevent future misunderstandings and problems, we will ask our lawyers to consult you when they have a grievance and ask you to consult us when you have a grievance. We also suggest that we have a meeting later in the year to review the situation.

6. We understand that pursuant to the foregoing pickets have been withdrawn.

Cesar, I know that the last week has been a difficult one for both of us. I regret any misunderstanding that may have been caused by CRLA. I'm confident that the understanding we have reached will resolve any differences which have developed between our organizations.