

NOTES on CONSULTATION re MEXICO U.S. BORDER PROGRAM

October 14, 1978

Present! NCRC Members - Susan Alexander, Clark de Schweinitz, Cushing Dolbeare, Luis Garcia, Juanita Luera, Mary Norris.

Staff: Phil Buskirk, Eleanor Eaton, Domingo Gonzalez, Ed Krueger, Barbara Moffett

Introduction Barbara Moffett first reviewed the Agenda (attached) and then at Eleanor Eaton's request, we reviewed the four main goals of the Program as approved by the Board.

These Goals are:

- I. Promote genuine public understanding of the nature and causes of the problems revealed along the Mexico-U.S. Border.
- II. Enable community participation in the large-scale economic development projects being planned along the Mexico-U.S. Border.
- III. Support efforts by communities on both sides of the border to identify and work on issues of common concern by developing their own effective organizations.
- IV. Play a strong monitoring and advocacy role on the national level in the U.S. in relation to policies proposed or implemented by the federal government, utilizing our continuing experience and involving community people in that monitoring and advocacy.

A. REPORT OF AD HOC \$1,000,000 BEQUEST COMMITTEE AND MEANING OF AUGMENTED PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS.

Cushing Dolbeare read and explained the following Minute ~~by~~ by the Ad Hoc Committee.

*presented to the Board*

"The Committee recommends that a minimum of \$350,000 be reserved to help initiate an augmented ~~program~~ version of the Board-approved program on U.S. Mexico border issues to include the present program proposal from CRD. The augmented program would be developed by CRD in consultation with I.D., PED, regions and MFSC and would be intended to involve the AFSC constituency and other U.S. Mexican citizens in learning about and understanding the broader issues raised by the introduction of "have" and "have-not" societies at a common border, participation in the development and refinement of AFSC approaches to these issues, and participation in support of these approaches."

Note was also taken of the letter from Oliver Rodgers who suggested that the program should learn from and inform those working on problems arising from other borders in the world where there is real economic imbalance and subsequent problems.

Cushing Dolbeare said that the Board and Committee hoped the program would contribute to the ability of the AFSC and the Religious Society of Friends to work together. This really means involving some members of the Society of Friends in the program and sharing our information with them to heighten their awareness of the nature of the problems and of AFSC approaches to those problems.

She also suggested that the Board hoped we could find ways to involve youth in the program in ways that would lead to their continuing involvement with

It was noted that the educational outreach to those who don't know about the issues is covered in part by the regular U.S. Newsletter, edited by Phil Buskirk and by the Boletin, prepared and distributed to a list of over 100 interested people within + without the AFSC.

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While the Board did not appropriate or earmark a specific sum for the Border work it gave the Program enthusiastic support and a go ahead signal to start recruiting ~~full~~ staff and putting the ~~entire~~ program in operation., (Other possible uses of the \$1 million dollar fund

as approved by the Board in June

recommended by the AD Hoc Committee include the development of a Peace and Disarmament program, expansion of the Quaker U.N. program.) The Board also is seriously concerned to ~~develop~~ <sup>strengthen the ability of</sup> the Mexican Friends Service Committee to do more community and economic development in Mexico.

Cushing made clear that the suggestions or the Ad Hoc Committee are merely suggestions. They are not engaged in program planning. ~~Phil Buskirk indicated that this was much on the mind of MFSC and they were working toward this.~~

She also noted that the Committee's recommendation was for a minimum of \$350,000 for the Border program.

In the discussion which followed Phil Buskirk indicated that economic and community development was much on the mind of the MFSC and they were working toward that end. Clark de Schweinitz was concerned about how the program would be able to keep the various facets of the program together and working along the same lines. He noted the different approaches, for example, of the Pacific Southwest Peace Education program from those of the Texas project. He also felt it important that all phases of the program ensure they were not coopted by the government or departments thereof.

Eleanor Eaton indicated that at our last meeting we had seen the need to make sure the 1980 census really included all the Chicano population along the border, including migratory workers. She had asked Ed Krueger to talk with Guillermo Glenn and to think about possible use of young volunteers

In the brief discussion that followed about the 1980 census, it was pointed out that while we have until 1980 most of the planning is now done and it will be difficult to influence procedure, which is to be a mail census. ←

Barbara Moffett, commenting on the need for outreach to Friends, felt that it would be extremely difficult to add this to the National Representative's job at this point and that adding another person would be probably unwise. She also reminded the group that in addition to the work of the two consultants, the whole of Goal I was part of the National Representative's job.

Ed Krueger said there was real interest in the 1980 Census, citing for example the interest of Angel Guttierrez of Crystal City and of the City Manager of Mission, the latter stressing the need for bi-lingual communication in taking the census. Both he and Guttierrez are supportive of working to see that the people living in unincorporated colonias get counted.

Phil Buskirk felt that perhaps the problem of school attendance would be a place where young people could be involved. Barbara wondered about a six months interneship. Cushing suggested that monitoring the UDAG grants would be another task, especially since it is known that Brownsville has applied for such a grant. Meanwhile Cushing will get as much data on the census process and procedures as she can. Mingo wondered what the various Chambers of Commerces and businesses were in terms of interest in the census being a complete one.

Finally, Cushing suggested that if we could put together a kind of information/ study packet on border issues for both Friends Meetings and Friends Schools, it would have an impact and might well be used.

At this point, while we were all discussing outreach, Eleanor Eaton suggested that we think of starting soon in planning a seminar in which the "teachers" or resource people would be "instructing" the attenders at the Seminar which might include carefully selected people from the media, from government, from business and from labor. Ideally there would be one seminar for representatives

She said we were fortunate in that Stephen Thierman, now head of QUNO, of the media and a following one for other people. Barbara Moffett felt that

was an expert on International Division type seminars and could cooperate with us. the seminar for media types would need a special occasion, it would need to be

timely and be based on community work but in a way that neither manipulates nor exploits community people.

Ed Krueger felt that a seminar was really down the road; that we need community development first, a point he developed later when, with the aid of a diagram he showed how tension and timing were bound to be part of the relationships of communities to resources, the AFSC, financing, technical assistance and seminars. Community development work needed to be sufficiently far along for communities to select their own representatives and leaders and we should not choose these representatives. Phil Buskirk felt that any seminar should take into account the fact, so well developed in Domingo's Immigration testimony, that there is a whole wide network of jobs that are substandard and that need to be considered in discussing problems resulting from the border and the economic imbalance between our two countries.

Juanita Luera expressed the fear in communities of being used by or exploited by the media and they should be kept at arms length.

Susan Alexander, however, said that the seminars held by the PSWRO had had a good and beneficial response from the media.

In talking of Quaker involvement Phil Buskirk acknowledged the difficulty but hoped that by working with the Latin American sections of the Friends World Committee, taking advantage of our good relationship with A. Carranza in Mejicali, and remembering the fact that Ciudad Victoria is the oldest Friends Meeting we should be able to make some impact on the interest of Friends.

At this point, someone wisely asked what we meant by "Quaker Involvement?" Cushing Dolbeare said involvement was an inappropriate word; what was really meant was education through experience and an effort to interpret the Program so Friends could understand the work and its implications. In brief, it means being responsive and adding resources as possible. The idea of a cultural exchange involving a young Friend was put forward by Domingo Gonzalez.

Our response to the suggestion for more economic development in Mexico brought forth from Juanita Luera the statement that work on economic development in the U.S. and Mexico were inseparable and involved AFSC and MFSC working in close cooperation. Phil Buskirk said that increase in travel dollars and in personell for MFSC so that they could cover larger sections of Mexico were part of the program as approved. Domingo Gonzalez commented favorably on the community development work in Mexico by the MFSC but hoped for increased emphasis along the border in particular locales. (At this point Ed Krueger said he felt a bit uneasy over the part of his job assignment which led to work in Mexico...he was uneasy about treading on MFSC's toes. For example he has been in touch with various ejidos who are interested in vegetable gardening and want help in getting soil sampling done in the U.S. He also knows of individuals who are leaders but need help in surviving. To him it would be ideal if MFSC could have full time staff workingout of Monterrey which is conveniently located to the sister towns along the Mexican side of the border.

B PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTHWEST AND THE WEST.

Juanita Luera, speaking for herself and for Guillermo Glenn, opened this agenda item by describing the Centro d'Atslan - a community center in Laredo. It is five years old and is designed to help people with the most common problems they have in dealing with the burocracy. Currently there are 500 families as memb ers. The Board is selected by and from the membership. They are in-

volved in whatever affects the community: health (South Texas Consumer Health Association), Immigration. (there are one million Chicanos in the original area five years ago and more now) coops (through the Texas Federation of Cooperatives they work with the Federation of Southern Cooperatives) In addition they have wide contacts along the Southwest border from Brownsville to California.

The Texas project will concentrate on community organizing in Brownsville, Laredo and El Paso <sup>but is working with a number of other groups.</sup> at the outset, In these communities there is talk, but as yet no action, regarding community economic development. One group is experimenting with back yard gardening. Robstown, especially wants to set up its own economic development programs. The Southwest Border Commission things in terms of aiding businesses to produce a few jobs but not in terms of projects of basic concern to community people.

A get together, called a seminar in shorthand, will be held November 3 and 4th. Its purpose is to let the community people give the project directions and deliberations will include thoughts of Mexican groups but no representatives aside from Marcos Cazares. It will be the first coming together of people from the three above named sites and will form a working group. They will be introduced to the project, told where we are at and asked to delineate the facts we need to know: eg. The Southwest Border Commission, what is it, who is it, and what does it do? The same for EDA and other agencies affecting these people and their communities. The seminar will also make known what resources there are along the border and seek to find out the plans and ideas of each group represented. There will be a planning session before the Seminar to further define program, etc. In essence this is a first step in translating the experience of Health Services Administration groups to Border issues/

She pointed out that while in the HSA fight the politicians won the first round. they had won the second round. The HSA organization in the Valley has lots of human resources, but few resources of other types. There is a real parallel

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between the health issue and the border problems - in health the doctors are getting richer at the expense of the consumer and in economic development the businesses are making more money and the poor getting poorer. It is the expectation that after the seminar there will be some clear pointers as to the general direction of the project and knowledge of what we need.

At this point it was suggested that the November meeting should help define the work of the three community organizers we are able to appoint during the program life.

Juanita said that communities need access to the technical information that the SWBRC has; they need technicians, certain expertise to work on different aspects of economic development. By technicians we mean people with special skills and able to do practical research.


The full proposal for a Center for Planning and Development Technology has been spelled out by Guillermo Glenn in a memorandum to Barbara Moffett. It calls for a budget of \$64,500 with four staff, including a Resources Center director.

Eleanor Eaton reminded the group of the experience in the Valley of FOURCO, an agricultural production coop which was taken over by the very technician hired to assist the members. Mary Norris felt that the agenda was too big. But it was agreed that we need to get the basic data about EDA and the SW RBC before the November 3/4 meeting, including copies of the enabling legislation, the regulations, etc. It would also be useful to strip down the report prepared by Manuel Lopez on the Commission, EDA, Border Cities group, etc. in a form that would be useful to the attenders.

Phil Buskirk and Eleanor Eaton were asked to get copies of the Act and regs and to prepare an analysis and get it into Guillermo and Ed 's hands before the 3rd.

In summary, it was agreed that the purpose of this seminar gathering was:



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1. To set up an organization called the Texas Border Project
  2. The TBP would have technicians and staff.
  3. Discussion of the idea of a Resource Center as described in Guillermo's memo.
  4. Development of positions on certain issues; define them and take a stand.
  5. Formulation of on-going program.

In discussing the Resource Center proposal there was a long discussion re the problem of accountability and the very nature of the Center, its rationale and function as well as its relation to the Texas Project and the Border Project as a whole. The need for flexibility in any technicians was stressed and the idea ~~through~~ that a Research Director with funds for consultants be substituted for the structured staff proposed by Guillermo Glenn was suggested. Some way of tying in with a computer system was also suggested with consumers (farm workers) being trained to use it.

Susan Alexander, after listening to the lengthy discussion of proposed and actual Texas activities felt that the Texas section of the Border was growing, the rest of the border in the Pasadena region was shrinking and would be bereft of funds. Barbara Moffett assured her this was not the case and then gave a brief history of our work in Texas. She stressed we were working in a big framework and that the approved proposal definitely included specific funds requested by the PSWRO. If there were to be a Resource Center it would have to have funds raised additionally .