MEMORANDUM

July 7, 1988

TO:       Joseph Campos – Director, Education Department

FROM:    Richard Hough – Coordinator, Agrarian Services

SUBJECT: Regional Conference for Agrarian Union Leaders in September 1988 in San Salvador

Please find below the suggestions and ideas for the subject conference which you requested from me some weeks ago.

First, I believe the subject matter of the conference should be broader and more open ended than the previous conference in Caracas. We need a theme, and terms of reference, more relevant than the one in Venezuela which was limited to land reform. I suggest an overall theme like "Consolidation and Expansion of Democratic Agrarian Unionism in the Hemisphere." This would provide us considerably more space to integrate into the conference agenda numerous other timely subjects of importance to campesino unions.

With regard to lecturers and/or instructors, I would suggest the following approaches. If feasible budget-wise, it would be attractive to have a Representative from the U.S. Farmer's Union to speak before the Conference. We know that Cesar Chavez has refused to visit Central American countries but would it not be possible to identify another senior member of his union to invite as one of the principal speakers at the conference?

In terms of specific names, I suggest Rupert Scofield and Bill Douglas. We could also invite Tito Castro to participate as a lecturer or discussion leader in the conference. I would note the obvious need for some Salvadoran professionals in rural development/agrarian fields to play a role in the Conference. Clemente should be working on this in San Salvador. We should approve those individuals whom he has identified.

Concerning subjects, Rupert should be given the task of developing a one or two day presentation on Campesino Organizations and Rural Development that would include such topics as project design, financial management, cooperative
organization, etc. Perhaps his George Meany Center presentation on this subject could be cut back or streamlined for the conference. I suggest that Bill Douglas be asked to develop a presentation on the dynamics of internal democracy in agrarian unions. Bill knows the subject matter very well and adapting it to the rural field should not present real problems.

May I suggest that you might develop a presentation on the Organization and Promotion of Rural Unions that deals with one of the central problems of campesino organizations in the Hemisphere today, that of the lack of expansion of their membership bases. As you are probably aware, membership in campesino organizations, at least in Central America, has either been standing still or diminishing through this decade.

I would like Tito Castro, if he is in attendance, to prepare a presentation on political action programs by agrarian unions, drawing on his experience in El Salvador as well as his present work in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. He should be able to give a spirited presentation on strategies of political action by local and national agrarian organizations.

I plan to prepare some new materials for the conference on agrarian reform programs and the development of economic and political pluralism through different types of agrarian organizations, e.g. campesino unions, cooperatives, savings and loan associations, etc. This material would be an adaptation of my chapter on "National Peasant Organizations" in the new book Promoting Democracy.

As we did last time in Caracas, I think we should allow a liberal amount of time for presentations by the senior representatives of the campesino federations who attend the conference. I am thinking in terms of one or two days of individual country presentations. The only change that I would suggest from what we did in Caracas is that we might work out a uniform format for the individual country presentations which would provide for more focus and less redundancy.

I will be away in the Dominican Republic from July 10-30 and will therefore miss the sessions with Clemente next week here in Washington. When I return the first week of August I will be ready to lend a further hand in whatever way necessary to move the planning of the conference forward.