

**Juan Bocanegra and Cindy Domingo**  
**Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office**

**Interviewees: Juan Bocanegra and Cindy Domingo**

**Affiliation: Northwest Labor and Employment Law Office**

**Interviewer: Monica Ghosh**

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MG August 18, 2000. How and why did you guys get involved in WTO mobilization?

JB To stop the white domination.

CD Of the nation.

JB Of the nation. To roll back... No. Why did we get involved? We were doing work prior to all the so called "heavy guns" come to town. We were working on a project called "Worker to Worker" under Legal Employment Northwest – Legal Employment Law Offices.

CD Labor and Employment Law Office. He doesn't know the name of our organization. I should put that down as one of the special conditions that we get to clean up the interview.

JB We had been discussing the issue of trade. We had called an international conference about a year and a half prior to this event, and we invited about 15 workers from around the world to sit down and talk with us about what they perceived in their countries of origin about trade as it was happening today. It was a very interesting long four- or five-day meeting that we had up in Seabeck conference site where we discussed basically the conditions that workers were facing around the world in regards to trade and the policies that principally, the United States was influencing in their countries and their governments of origin.

It was a pretty naked discussion amongst ourselves. It was a very slow process because we had to do sometimes three or four simultaneous translations of people who spoke Korean, people who spoke Portuguese, Spanish, Zulu... God, I can't remember all the languages. So it had to go through a series of translations. So we had to listen very closely to each other.

We came out with principles from that conference that basically have guided our work through the WTO and through this whole mishmash of rallies that are going around the country. Those principles continue to guide our international work, our "Work to Worker" project.

MG So that conference motivated the involvement in the WTO protest?

CD Well, right. Some of us from LELO had been participating in the – I can't remember the name of the coalition that was developed.

JB The organizing coalition?

CD The big coalition. What's the name of that [organization] headed by the white guy?

MG People for Fair Trade?

CD Yes, People for Fair Trade. We had gone to some of their meetings because of our previous work, our historical work.

MG Was this last summer that you guys started going to those meetings?

CD Yes, when it was initially being formed. We went to a few of the meetings in the beginning and were a little bit discouraged because they were predominantly all white. Then knowing Seattle, we were discouraged but weren't deterred from going, so we kept going, trying to raise the issues of the whiteness of the coalition which would then impact the agenda that is drawn up as a result of who attends those meetings in the People for Fair Trade coalition.

Well, after going to a number of meetings and continually seeing that the basis at the coalition weren't changing in terms of color, or even when we tried to raise the issues that were important to our communities as well as who is doing – is there outreach going on in the communities of color and is there money being spent in order to do that outreach, we continued to hit kind of a brick wall.

That's when we decided that we were... And then it was so hard to find out information about what was going to happen at the WTO.

MG What do you mean?

CD For example, we were concerned, which is one of the reasons we decided to have our December 4<sup>th</sup> conference focusing on women, how come there wasn't specific focus being paid to women and globalization? We were told for a number of months, "Oh, there are some people organizing some issues around women." So we kept trying to find out what that is, who we could contact...?

MG Who was telling you this?

CD People in People for Fair Trade, and also when we would go to the coalition meetings, and someone would say, "Oh, don't worry about that. Somebody is organizing that." Then we'd say, "How can the local communities get involved in it? You can't come into Seattle and then not involve us locally. It's not like we haven't been working on these issues for a number of years also, and how else are you going to get people of color involved here unless you tell us how you're going to interact with these issues that we've been working on?"

They kept telling us, and then they'd say, "Oh, somebody from so and so forth has been appointed to help organize this all-day conference on women." Well, you couldn't find any information. So that's why. You couldn't find out any information. Nobody was willing to help us get the information. They weren't going to give us any money to do some of the local organizing to get the communities of color, and it also looked like, "Well, you're not the chosen ones to do that kind of work. We don't care what your history has been in this community and this city. We're going to handpick the people who want it to be done if it's going to be done right."

MG Do you feel like information was purposely kept from you?

CD Yes.

JB Yes.

JB Not only that, but they also brought people from the outside to represent sectors of our community rather than to deal with sectors that were already working here.

MG Can you give an example of it?

CD The Black community.

JB Well, the environmental community, but people from New Mexico and from Texas, folks that I know. We have environmentalists who are people of color here that are working on all those issues and a community base on issues like that, but they brought outside folks in, presented them as leadership - and they may be leadership, but they overwhelmed and overshadowed the local folks.

The people that they brought in were beholden to them because they made their appearance in Seattle possible, so they were not going to criticize them openly about what they were doing. They were not going to criticize them openly about the agenda. They were not going to criticize them about the participation of the locals and the lack of participation of people of color. They were just their guests, right?

So, yes, there was a very overt campaign on the part of some people within that citizen action group, especially the leadership. I don't remember what that white boy's name is.

CD What was his name?

MG Mike Dolan?

JB Yes, Mike Dolan.

CD He purposely kept information from us, and then tried to tell us, "We're going to get you money," but then they had no intentions of ever giving us money to help us organize.

JB Then he said, "Well, I'll assign somebody to work," because I asked him personally if he could assign somebody from his staff to help us work on this project. He assigned the only third world person in the whole staff that he had, a young lady by the name of Lydia, who was already overtaxed with work. She was assigned to organize the youth in the region, and now she had the insurmountable responsibility of trying to organize people of color, and it was just impossible, and he knew that. I think that's a very good example of what was going on. In fact, Lydia was so frustrated with the racism that was going on inside the organization that she could spit during the times when we would talk.

So some of it was overt and some of it was innate to those types of groups. They're racist, liberal, bullshitting groups.

CD It's like also in the Black community, Labor brought in an organizer from the South.

JB Orange. Reverend Orange.

CD Reverend Orange, who was supposed to garner the local Black support for the coalition, and bring them to that labor day huge march that they had.

JB On November 30<sup>th</sup>.

CD Right. And so it's like, we'd been doing work in the Black community for decades now, and Reverend Orange actually came to our first Workers' Voices coalition meeting. Didn't really say much, but then said, "Oh, I'll be in touch with all you folks," and never touched base with us again. Meanwhile, he goes off and tries to organize in the Black community, not knowing what the dynamics in the Black community was.

If he would have just asked us, we could told him, "You're going to have a difficult time garnering support with that particular Black leadership, because they were focusing mainly on the Black leadership and not in the kind of working class people or everyday people that we were really trying to turn out for the WTO, because that sector of the Black community essentially did not want to go protest the WTO. Their interest was working on the African trade bill, which was part of the whole globalization process of Africa.

So you see on the day of the Labor march, the Black community really had no big presence there because he was totally off base in terms of who he was working with and what his assessment of the Black community was.

So it's like, when they decided to turn their backs on those who had been working on the local communities of color for years, they couldn't mobilize. And it's not to say that we could have mobilized hundreds and hundreds of people of color, but if they would have helped in terms of resources, maybe there could have been a little bit of difference in terms of some of the turnout.

That's also why we decided to go off and form our own coalition and essentially carry out our own work separate from both the labor and the Dolan-Citizens Action folks.

MG Why do you think you were marginalized or excluded from a lot of things?

CD I don't think they were really interested in doing some local, building a base in the local area. I think that that's played out in, say, Washington, D.C., when people weren't able to organize a local response to the World Bank stuff. And here they were interested in working with those folks that always come out, traditionally come out, which is the white, middle-class community, the peace community, which is predominantly white. But it's tougher to bring out those marginalized communities and communities of color.

If you really wanted to focus on that, you'd have to put resources and time in it and then really work with the folks who've been doing that work locally. They weren't interested. Dolan wasn't interested in doing that, I don't think.

MG Do you attribute a lot of the problems directly to him?

JB Well, unfortunately, he was at the helm of the work. He was controlling it. Even though there was a coalition built, all information about workshops or the web, all that was channeled through him. They have a very tight network that they developed. The problem, and yet he kept telling me that he needed to play his cards right because he needed labor to participate, but those two elements basically excluded quite a bit of folks.

Labor can definitely pull out workers, but if it hadn't been, for example, for our efforts in the Workers' Voices Coalition, Labor would have had nothing but

bureaucrats and upper-echelon speakers. As a result, because of our work, labor took the opportunity to present them as their guest. Even though they gave us some credit for it, but they were the only true workers. I shouldn't say the "true workers," but rank and file workers, that actually spoke of their own personal experiences with globalization, and those were our guests that we brought in from the Dominican Republic, South Africa, etc.

CD We were only able to get them on the program, really, at the last minute, within the last two weeks leading up to the WTO.

JB We had talked with Dolan. We had talked with Labor about helping us bring those folks down, asking them for some monies, because we felt that those people needed to be here to speak to the issues. I mean, they brought down intellectuals from India. They brought people from higher levels, doctors and political bureaucrats, mostly labor bureaucrats, but they were not representative of the issues that were going down in their countries.

So their experience was a lot of rhetoric from what I can see. They can talk. The doctors and people who were in specific sciences could speak specifically about genetics and those kinds of issues, the usage of seeds and control of the intellect, but when it came down to the grassroots, everyday work, that was it. They had nothing to say.

MG What was the breaking point where you just, like, we have to create something of our own? If we don't, then we're not going to have a presence there. Were there specific incidents or a time period where you were just, like, we've got to...

CD I think it was probably August or September. We didn't form the Workers' Voices coalition until mid-October, or early October, mid-October. So it was within six or seven weeks we raised all that money and made arrangements for people to come. But I would say it was probably around September when it was obvious that they weren't going to give us any money to bring these workers and to bring the voice of workers into the WTO.

MG Is that what LELO wanted to do?

CD That was our concrete proposal, but in the meetings leading up to it when we kept saying, "Who is being brought here? Where are the voices of workers from around the world?" as well as, "Where is the local outreach work? Who is doing the local outreach work? Where are the resources going to?" When it was obvious that those three or four issues were not going to be addressed, we said, "There is no use to being part of this coalition that you guys have, and it is still lily white."

I remember the last meeting I went to at the Labor Temple. There were 100, 125 people there, and there were three or four people of color. They were breaking up into neighborhoods to do outreach, and the majority of people were from north of the Ship Canal. There was maybe one person from Rainier Valley and one person from Beacon Hill, and so obviously the outreach in those communities were not going to get done, because there was nobody there representing those neighborhoods.

So those were the neighborhoods that we're interested in working in. So, it's like, well, if you really have nothing in common, and you're not going to help us do that work then we might as well go form another coalition that will focus on these

issues.

- MG What was their reaction?
- CD They didn't care. No, they didn't care. Finally Dolan said, "Look. I don't control the money, and there's no money here to give you." Meanwhile, he was doling out money left and right. Everyone knew that he controlled the purse strings, so then that's when he said, "You can have Lydia, and that's all you're going to get."
- JB Even Lydia didn't have a place to work, because she was just like left out there on her own. What happened to Lydia is classical. Look what happens to a lot of people of color working in those kinds of organizations. Lydia actually leaned on a lot of us.
- MG What did you guys do to organize the Workers' Voices Coalition? Can you tell me a little bit about the beginning, the first days, how you got people together and different grassroots organizations from around here you organized?
- CD Essentially what we did was looked at the organizations that we had worked with in the past, those organizations were also not being involved in Dolan's coalition, and I think just called a meeting and said, "This is what LELO is putting forth."
- MG Where was the meeting?
- CD The first meeting? It was at LELO's office. "This is what we would like to do, and this is what our concerns are in terms of what is not being addressed by the other coalition."
- MG Who was there at the first meeting, or at the beginning?
- CD CCJ, Zapatista work, People from Pacific Task Force, from the Church Council who represented also Church Women United, and some other church groups.
- JB WWOAR.
- CD White Women Organizing Against Racism, Seattle Young People's Project, and then some folks from Evergreen.
- MG Your goal was to bring workers from around the world to the protests, to the demonstrations?
- CD Well, to bring workers, rank and file workers, to come and address the issues that were important to you on the impact of globalization, so, one, we decided to organize our own conference, focusing on women and globalization and immigration, but also then to figure out other platforms in which they could address the issues.
- MG How did you get them on the platform on November 30<sup>th</sup>? Was it difficult to get labor to allow the people up there to speak?
- CD I think we were working with, I mean, we kept trying to get them through various avenues, right? We were trying to get money, because, how many people we brought here, eight people...
- MG How did you get the money?
- CD We just fund-raised it.

- MG How?
- JB Letters.
- CD The people from the Asia Pacific Task Force raised quite a bit of the money. Bill Cate, Dr. Bill Cate; he used to be head of the Church Council and is part of the Asia Pacific Task Force, raised quite a bit of the money.
- JB We just started asking for donations from individuals and asking money from people that have resources.
- CD We actually got \$5,000 from the Board of Global Ministries, the Methodists, at the national level. That was one of the big ones.
- JB There were smaller \$2,000 donations locally.
- CD Yes, individuals, people that LELO had worked with and the Asia Pacific Task Force had worked with in the past around these issues.
- JB We fund-raised our own base also.
- MG The money covered the workers' trips out here and then lost wages.
- JB Transportation, food, lodging, lost wages. That's about it. Oh, and we made some signs. We made some arm bands. We actually led the whole issue. I don't know how the word got out that we were going to use red and black, which are the colors of strike, general strike. So when we got there, many of the people in labor had been donned in that color and so it had spread out. Everybody was using red and black, and I thought, wow! So that was a good, symbolic gesture that, I think, we generated. So we had various kinds of things like handkerchiefs.
- MG What did you guys do then?
- JB The conference. We paid for the conference and the printing and all that stuff.
- MG And then where was the conference?
- JB And the rental. It was at Seattle University. And food for the participants, because it was free conference.
- MG What were the day's events for the November 4<sup>th</sup> conference?
- JB There was a panel of speakers, mainly the companeras coming from different parts of the world.
- MG I'm sorry. What was the title of the conference?
- CD It was Workers Conference on Women, Immigration and Globalization. So what we were looking at, because it was already the tail end, the end of the WTO, is where do we go from here? It's not like the issues were going to go away after the WTO, but how do we continue to work to address the issues that those workers raised?
- MG When did you start organizing? Did you start organizing right away for this?
- CD Yes. That was the whole point of bringing together the Workers' Voices Coalition. We put forth a December 4<sup>th</sup> conference and put forth these speakers that we wanted to bring, the whole thrust of the conference to address the whole issue of

women, because nobody was taking up that issue as far as we could tell.

They did have a whole day on women during the WTO, but that was the conference that we couldn't find out any information on. And then I went to parts of that conference, and there was no rank and file women involved on any of those panels. They were a lot of intellectuals and researchers that were addressing the audience.

So these were all the people that are listed here were members of the Workers' Voices.

MG Is there any way I can get a copy of this?

CD Yes. I could make you a copy.

MG That'd be great if I could get a copy of that. Can you talk a little bit about the Workers' Voices Coalition's relationship with Labor during the protests?

JB They did send people from Labor to our meetings. Jobs with Justice participated in our coalition to a certain extent. I don't know any other groups.

CD They never came back. They came...

JB They came for one meeting.

CD ...for one meeting, because she brought Reverend Orange. That was it.

JB Basically they came in to see what we were doing. And including people from Citizen Action came in to see what we were doing, and then they didn't return.

CD That was our hint that they just came to see what we were up to, and once they found out what... Because we pretty much laid out all our plans then, and they never returned. They said, "Oh. Well, this is very interesting. We'd like to help. La de dah de dah," and never came back.

But the SUN and Jobs for Justice, they were instrumental in helping us get the speakers on the platform. But, again, it was only because, I think, Labor didn't want to get caught with its pants down. They realized that they had no rank and file workers, not even any white workers, speaking on that platform, and I don't think it was by chance that it was the Vice President, what's her name?

JB Linda Chavez-Thompson?

CD Right, who introduced our workers from abroad, because how can you have her sitting on the stage and then you've got no other people of color other than labor bureaucrats. And she may have been instrumental in that, too. We don't know. We're not quite sure how all the decisions got made, but then it was kind of like, all of a sudden you get this call and say, "Oh, well, we really want your workers to come and address the rally."

But they also tried to screen all the speeches that were made, even in terms of ... Originally they were going to have their own translator to make sure all the speeches had to be written and approved by the AFL-CIO person, so they were trying to screen anything that was put out, too.

MG What were your activities the day of November 30<sup>th</sup>?

- CD November 30<sup>th</sup>?
- MG November 30<sup>th</sup>.
- JB The actual march.
- MG You guys went to the march?
- CD Yes.
- JB Yes.
- JB We went to the march. We got organized first outside SEIU Local 6.
- MG How many people did you guys have with you?
- JB I don't know. Unfortunately, I wasn't there. I had to accompany the workers.
- CD We probably all together when we came together we probably had about a hundred people, but it was hard, because people got separated, and then other people had other tasking. But that's why we wanted to identify ourselves. We had a banner. We had our picket signs, our Workers' Voices Coalition signs which everybody loved.
- I don't know if you've seen them. They are at the offices, but we were walking along with them, because we were trying to preserve them for people who were going to walk with us, and people said, "Oh. Can we get one of those? Can we get one of those?" And then we had armbands, etc.
- So then after the workers finished speaking on the platform, they joined us and we were able to garner all our supporters together and march. So we marched as a contingent, and then at some point when the rally march was starting to get divided and people were headed into downtown, we had to deter our workers from going to the places where they were getting arrested, because we didn't want the folks to get arrested, because they were here on visitors' Visas. We had to keep going, "Hey. You guys."
- JB It was really hard for them, because it was like a prison camp, I mean, what they see in their own countries, unfortunately, because in their countries they use real bullets, not rubber bullets, but it was still difficult for them. We had to take care of them. It was hard for us, because they wanted to get into the ruckus.
- CD We couldn't afford for them to get arrested, or else they would get deported and they'd never get a visa to come back to the United States.
- MG Do you guys know the Peoples' Assembly's march from downtown. Did you guys not participate in that because your workers were speaking at the labor?
- JB Which assemblies?
- MG From the International District? Wasn't there a march?
- CD That was a conscious decision not to work with those folks. I have a history of working in the Filipino movement, and so am very aware of the different politics within the Philippine support movement, and I disagreed, and other people in LELO disagreed with not only their analysis of the Philippines, but felt that they hold some very ultra-left politics in terms of analysis of the global situation where

peoples' struggles are at in different countries, and especially in the Philippines. So, that was a conscious decision that politically we do not agree with their politics, and that's why we didn't work within that coalition.

JB We had a lot of friends that were coming to the march, including my son, Miguel Angel, who participated in organizing with the MEChA students and other University students . Other folks that were our friends. We were not that consolidated as an organization. So a lot of them were just friendships that we have had over the years.

MG Does the Workers' Voices Coalition still exist?

JB Yes.

MG What are you guys working on now or are doing?

JB The last project we worked on was to help the women's delegation do a fund-raiser. We had done a presentation in Colombia. We were going to do one on Chile, do something just to keep everybody's mind out of LaLa land, and so hopefully within the next couple of months we are able to keep working and just try to move forward on some of the other projects that we want to do. We need to bring in more education projects, some of the other community's issues. Welfare, for example. There are some very strong coalitions around the country, and welfare's right organizing committee was part of the coalition, WROC, and we have to do one there. We have to do another one with the Chilean community, because right now they are going through the whole phase of trying to put in jail that fascist dog Pinochet.

CD We helped do the West Coast tour of the student from Mexico, which was a major undertaking.

JB That was a lot, and we financed it. And we supported and helped people from El Salvador, endorsed them, and did all that other work. So the Coalition has done quite a bit of work for its very short life. On top of it, all the demand that we have, tax stuff. In reality, the LELO folks have actually carried most of the work on its back, the coalition, because most of the other groups don't have very much resources, or they're not that well organized.

MG What moment of that week had the greatest impact on you guys?

JB What?

MG What had the greatest impact on you, like, during the week of the protests?

JB Not being able to be in the middle of the struggle with the young kids and all the rest of the demonstrators.

CD Not being able to get arrested, for him.

Actually, I think the December 4<sup>th</sup> conference, even though people were exhausted, I think just not only meeting the people that came from the different countries and hearing their stories, but consolidating this whole inter-relationship between women globalization and immigration, and everything went so well that day.

Then about a third of the people that came to that conference were people of color. So in the different events that I had gone to, again, I didn't go to any of the People's Assembly events, because I knew I would probably be disappointed in the politics that were put out there. I didn't really want to waste my time, so I don't know what their turnout was in terms of people of color, but I think the fact that we were able to get a third of the people that came to our conference, the people of color, and new people.

We were a little disappointed at some of the people that we had historically worked with. Some of the working people in LELO's work did not turn out, but there were other new people of color. The fact that students really took the lead in some of the protests and some of the organizing around it I think raised our spirits quite a bit in terms of the potential.

But also, then, just the challenges that lie ahead of us in terms of getting people of color to understand the relationships between their everyday lives and what's going on globally, that is still not being made.

MG Do you have anything else that you'd like to add?

JB I think, in general, just the fact that people were able to get a message about how trade, the impact that trade was having on people around the world was good. I agree with what Cindy said. Unfortunately it wasn't that clear.

The other part was that people still did not understand the connection between local issues like the police brutality issues here, the murders that happen, specifically of black men and other issues like immigration, were not something that was really pushed, because those have a major impact.

The other thing is that people talk about a 30,000- 40,000- 50,000-person march in Seattle as impressive. Many people forget or did not hear because of the media blackout and the out right neglect of third world people's struggles. When you look at the number of Latinos that marched in Los Angeles opposing the infamous Initiative 187. The march there brought out 250,000 people to the streets. Farrakhan, for all his reactionary politics, brought out close to a million people. In 1996, we mobilized 100,000 people in the immigration issue in Washington, D.C.

What this march did was that it brought white people out. White people were in the forefront on this issue. We had tried to get on top of this issue but we were out, we had, which was critical, was the violent reaction by the Police Department. To me, I was laughing. The white people were so innocent and so dumbfounded that a cop would kick their ass. I said, "Where the fuck do you think you've been?" We've been getting our butts kicked. "Well, he hit me." "Yeah. Turn the other cheek. He'll hit you on the other one, too." To me that was funny. To me that was critical, because I think white America and most middle class people need to understand the violent nature of the police state that we've been living in.

MG One more thing. Were other grassroots organizations getting marginalized that weren't necessarily organizations of color, members weren't predominantly people of color?

JB Were other people marginalized, other groups?

- MG I guess, you had met a lot of national people that were coming in. Did that go for like white environmental groups that were local to Seattle area?
- CD The big, white environmental groups in Seattle are connected with the ones nationally, so I don't think they have the same problem, because they have the connections. But somebody like the Community Coalition for Environmental Justice who is just a very small, grassroots organization focusing on environmental justice doesn't have those connections with Greenpeace or the Sierra Club. They don't have those connections, because they don't have the same kind of agenda.
- JB The green anarchists.
- CD Right. So that's why I don't think they were marginalized, because they've been always part of that white environmental national movement.
- JB The anti-WTO rally was small compared to other third world people rallies that focused around social justice issues. Most rallies around economics and to globalization have actually brought out white folks, and to me that's significant, because people of color have already come out in mass. White folks had not come out in mass in a number of years and confronted the authorities in a militant way. Their actions were significant and they didn't realize the impact they had had on the world. That's why we behaved ourselves, and participated even though we had again been left out of the loop of the "big guns".
- In 1996 in the Immigrant Rights march in Washington, D.C., there was not one single incident of violence amongst each other or against anybody else. Very well disciplined, but we got the message across. We're going to have another one on October 14<sup>th</sup>, and we're going to double our numbers. Any time they see us, all through our people, they're going to see large numbers. They're going to see 30,000, 50,000, not the 20,000 or 30,000 in D.C. or the 20,000 in L.A. Those numbers are small.
- White folks need to understand that this shit is serious. If they really want to do something, they ought to bring out a 100,000, because their numbers in comparison to our numbers are bigger, and they should be bringing a lot more. I'm ashamed of them. I keep telling them, "You guys are Johnny Come Lately's, man. The only reason you get attention is because you've got a couple of clowns dressed in black and go around destroying shit, and they're police provocateurs."
- But you see that a lot of resources that universities, the press, the state, the feds put on white people to put on their punky little demonstrations. They put a huge lot of resources, but on ours? Has the University ever done a study on immigration on this magnitude? Has Ms. Margaret Levi done anything in relation to the conditions of Black people in the United States or in the Filipino community to this magnitude? No. You get 30,000 white folks, and boy, oh, shit, the world coming to a fucking end. Bullshit. I'm just tired of these white folks. They are just so arrogant. And the problem is they've got us sucking up to their asses.
- CD Oh, now you got him started.
- MG That's good.
- JB And quote me on that one.

CD And that was Juan Bocanegra.

JB Coming to you live. Good morning.

CD Just one last thing. That's one of the reasons why we decided to keep the Workers' Voices Coalition going. While its presence isn't being felt largely in Seattle for people of color and for other people that have been marginalized from the white movement, there's no other forum or coalition in which we can come together and discuss our issues or do educational together or to network together.

It's always a new issue supposedly arises and we've always got to form a new coalition, so it's not like we have weekly meetings or monthly forums. We knew that because of the strain of doing our day-to-day work already was enough for some of these small organizations; they can barely do anything more than just what they're doing now, but that if there comes periods of time in which we feel certain educational are important or somebody is coming into town...

I mean, that's what we did with the Mexico issue. After the WTO, the two people that came from Mexico went back to Mexico City and organized a demonstration in support of those people that were still in jail. As a result, the police repressed them in Mexico City and there were mass arrests there. So that's why we decided to bring someone up from Mexico City and talk about the struggle and the students there and why those issues were connected with the issues of globalization and what was happening here in our country.

So it wasn't like we had all thought this out, that this is what we were going to do with the coalition once the WTO was over, but there's still a need for something like the Workers' Voices Coalition so that people of color and/or organizations that are working on issues that impact people of color here and abroad can work together.

End of interview