

Carlos Montes Papers

Title: Carlos Montes Papers

Collection Number: 2014.001

Creator: Montes, Carlos

Dates: 1948-2014

Extent: 12.34 linear ft.

Repository: California State University, Los Angeles, John F. Kennedy Memorial Library, Special Collections and Archives

Location: Special Collections & Archives, Palmer, 4th floor Room 4048 - A

Provenance: Donated by Carlos Montes

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Arrangement: The collection is organized into twelve series: I. Subject/Topical Files; II. Legal Document; III. Publications; IV. Newsletters; V. Clippings; VI. Newspapers; VII. Announcements & Flyers; VIII. Correspondence; IX. Scrapbook; X. Photographs; XI. Posters; XII. Ephemera

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Historical/Biographical Note

Carlos Montes (1947-) is a nationally respected leader in the Chicano, immigrant rights, and anti-war movements. Montes was born December 28, 1947 in El Paso, Texas while his family lived in Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. He lived his early childhood in the border town of Juarez, in 1956 his family moved to South Los Angeles the Florencia area, and later to Boyle Heights and East L.A.

Montes' father worked in a factory assembly line manufacturing coffee tables as a member of the Carpenters Union industrial section, while his grandfather, Alejandro Alvarado, was a member of Pancho Villa's revolutionary army. His family was raised with stories told by his mother of the Mexican revolution.

Montes graduated from Miramonte Elementary School, Hollenbeck Junior High School and James A. Garfield High School. At East Los Angeles College (ELAC), Montes joined the Mexican American Student Association in 1967, after participating in student government. He founded the La Vida Nueva Chicano student group at ELAC, organizing and fighting for the first Chicano Studies department at ELAC. He also took part in founding the Movimiento Estudiantil de Aztlán (MECHA).

While attending ELAC, Montes worked as a teen post director in Lincoln Heights on Broadway, where he met Father John Luce of the Church of the Epiphany and Eliazar Risco, editor of *La Raza* newspaper. There, he was introduced to the Young Chicanos for Community Action and La Pyrana Coffee House in East L.A., where the Brown Berets, a Chicano revolutionary group fighting for self-determination, were started. He was a leader and one of the founders of the original Brown Berets and became the minister of information, the spokesperson for the group.

As a leader in the Brown Berets, he organized the first protest at the East L.A. Sheriff's station against police brutality in the winter of 1967. He helped to lead the Brown Berets into a national organization with chapters in the Southwest.

Additionally, he was a leader and organizer in the historic East L.A. Walkouts in March of 1968, which led to major reforms and changes in the Los Angeles Unified School District. He was indicted by a secret L.A. County Grand Jury and arrested for conspiracy to disrupt the school system with many other charges in what became known as the East L.A. 13 case; charges later dropped.

In 1968, Montes participated in the first National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference in Denver Colorado, where the Plan Espiritual de Aztlán was formulated and the demand for self-determination for the Chicano Nation was popularized. He worked to forge alliances with the Black Panther Party and supported the Free Huey Newton political prisoner's campaign.

He participated in organizing the first Chicano Moratorium in December 1969 against the war in Vietnam. This led to the historic August 29, 1970, National Chicano Moratorium when more than 20,000 Chicanos protested the high casualty of Chicanos in the Vietnam War, and the killing of Mexican American journalist, Ruben Salazar.

Montes was married to Olivia Velasquez in January 1970. Due to the heavy repression and threats, they went underground and lived in Mexico in 1970. Later they settled in the Juarez El Paso area. Montes worked in El Paso as a carpenter with the International Brotherhood of Carpenters, building public housing. He also worked as a maintenance mechanic at Farah textile plant, as a steel worker at Phelps Dodge copper refinery, and Thomson General Hospital as a maintenance

mechanic. Montes and Olivia raised two children—Felicia, who is a cultural activist with Mujeres de Maíz in Lak Ech, a teacher and union organizer, and Reies, who is a local fire fighter and active in his union.

Montes later became a member of the L.A. Chapter of the Community Service Organization (CSO) and also on the Board of the CSO Credit Union. As part of the CSO in the early 1990s, Montes was involved with several campaigns against police killings by the L.A. County Sheriff's office. He was also part of the reform campaign of the L.A. Sheriff's during the Koltz Commission.

He was a leader in the reorganizing as well as the 20th commemoration of the National Chicano Moratorium in 1990, where more than 5,000 people marched and rallied the historic route to Salazar Park and opposed the first war on Iraq.

Under the leadership of Montes in the late 1990s, the Centro CSO along with local parents formed the city of Boyle Heights, and led a Clean Schools Campaign. He helped to initiate the Schools Not War campaign, demanding a new high school in Boyle Heights to relieve the overcrowding at Roosevelt H.S., and an end to military recruitment on the campus. He was instrumental in winning a new school, Mendez Learning Complex, now built in Boyle Heights. He helped to found the Latinos against War group in 2003, which led marches and teach-ins in East Los Angeles and supported the citywide opposition to the war in Iraq.

In May 2004, he joined Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 660 as a field representative organizer and was assigned to the L.A. County Health Department, where he fought for workers' rights and helped found the SEIU International Latino Caucus. He was later assigned to the LAC+USC Medical Center, where he organized Black, Latino and Asian members to unite and work together to improve working conditions.

Montes also helped organize and initiate a large march and rally demanding legalization and end to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids at the 10-year anniversary of the mass protest against the racist 187 State initiative. He pushed SEIU 660 and other locals to support the March 25 and May 1 mega marches for immigrant rights and against the Sensenbrenner bill that attacked immigrants. In 2007, he was arrested for civil disobedience protesting the ICE raids and supporting Elvira Arellano, an immigrant rights leader, who was deported August 18, 2007.

Montes also worked on the campaign to defeat McCain and the fight for immigration reform and the end the racist ICE raids. He participated in the major protest march against the Republican National Committee on September 1, 2008. The FBI began to infiltrate the March on the RNC Committee and the local Anti-War Committee, which Carlos endorsed and helped mobilize.

Currently, he is on the steering committee of the Southern California Immigration Coalition and a volunteer organizer with Centro CSO, organizing parents to promote public education and to resist the privatization attack by charter schools in East L.A. In October 2012, he was elected to the Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council and chairs the Transportation Environment Committee. This committee has initiated several pro-immigrants' rights resolutions in support of driver's licenses for the undocumented and end to the police car impounds of unlicensed drivers.

Scope and Content

The materials in this collection was created from 1948-2014. The bulk of the collection includes subject/topical files and legal documents most of which were maintained with the original title given by Carlos Montes upon donation. The subject/topical files contain information on various groups and activities, which, Montes played an active role in such as PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) and the 1968 Blowouts. The legal documents pertain to the State of California vs Carlos Montes, Biltmore Case and the East LA 13 court case. Smaller series include publications, newsletters, newspaper clippings, newspapers, political announcements & flyers, correspondence, posters, scrapbook, and ephemera.

Series Description

Series I: Subject/Topical Files

Inclusive Dates: 1968-1994

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This large series consists of subject/topical files of Carlos Montes participation and activity in the Global Exchange, a San Francisco-based non-government educational organization, Cuba, Community Advisory Committee for the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza, and the Blowouts in 1968.

Series II: Legal Documents

Inclusive Dates: 1968-1979

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This large series consists of legal documents pertaining to the political trial for the Biltmore case, Biltmore case grand jury indictment, and legal transcripts of the court proceedings from the East LA high school walkouts prosecution.

Series III: Publications

Inclusive Dates: 1948-2012

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This small series consists of the *Los Angeles Magazine* with an article featuring Carlos Montes. It also includes an article titled *Un-American Activities, in California*, containing information of the development of the Brown Berets. In addition, it includes an article titled *Latino Empowerment Los Angeles Postwar Dreams and Cold War Fears, 1948 – 1952* by Kenneth C. Burt and *Mexican Grassroots and Social Movements* by Laura Carlsen.

Series IV: Newsletters

Inclusive Dates: 1993-1994

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

The bulk of this series consists of newsletters from PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) Newsletter. Other newsletters include *The ROC*, *LA Voz de Nueva Maravilla*, *Resist*, and *Copwatch*.

Series V: Clippings

Inclusive Dates: 1971-1994

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This small series consists of small and oversized newspaper clippings. The older newspaper clippings from 1971 include information about the role of an undercover officer in the Biltmore case. The series also includes newspaper clippings from 1977 – 1978 with titles, *Carlos Montes frame-up: Repression against Chicano Movement*, *Carlos Montes Back From Exile*, *Chicano Activist Fights L.A. Frame-up*, and *Force the State to Free Carlos Montes*.

Series VI: Newspapers

Inclusive Dates: 1969-2012

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This small series consists of four newspapers, *Lucha Y Resiste! La Causa*, *La Raza*, and *Tribune*. A noteworthy first edition of *La Causa* newspaper contains a poster of Carlos Montes and includes *La Raza* edition about the murder of journalist, Ruben Salazar.

Series VII: Announcements & Flyers

Inclusive Dates: 1977-2014

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This small series consists of announcements and flyers for *Justice for Carlos Montes*, *Free Carlos Montes*, and *Drop All Charges against Carlos Montes*. The bulk of this series were produced by PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza).

Series VIII: Correspondence

Inclusive Dates: 1979-1994

Arrangement: Alphabetical and thereunder chronological

This very small series consists of letters to Carlos Montes showing support for the Justice for Carlos Montes Committee.

Series IX: Scrapbook

Inclusive Dates: 1977-1978

Arrangement: Maintained in original order by the creator

The scrapbook materials were removed from damaged original binder and placed in a file folder for preservation. The scrapbook contains announcements, flyers, newspaper articles, and correspondence depicting Carlos Montes fight for justice and community support through 1977-1978.

Series X: Photographs

Inclusive Dates: 1968-1980

Arrangement: Alphabetical

This series contains photographs depicting the Anti-Bakke Racism Protest March Rally, San Francisco, CA, 1971, Carlos Montes Speaking at MECHA Rally Ventura College, 1978, Protest in Front of L.A. Criminal Court Building, and photographs of Carlos Montes held in the Los Angeles Police Department Files.

Series XI: Posters

Inclusive Dates: undated

Arrangement: Alphabetical

This small series contains two posters, *Defend the right to speak freely!* which depicts Carlos Montes protesting for education, against FBI harassment, and war. The other poster was created by the Justice for Carlos Montes Committee and David Dominguez Justice Committee announcing a benefit dance including Teatro Urbano.

Series XII: Ephemera

Inclusive Dates: 1978
Arrangement: None

This small series contains four items: two buttons one of which depicts the image of Carlos Montes wearing a brown beret and one stating, "Chicano Power." The other two ephemera pieces include raffle ticket packet for a \$1.00 donation for Justice for Carlos Montes Committee and a fabric banner titled, *Sindicato Unico De Trabajadores De Autotransportes Urbanos De Pasajeros R100, u.d.*

Container List

Box 1

Series I: Subject/Topical Files, 1968-1994

- 1.1 Blowouts, Demands, etc., 1968
- 1.2 Carlos Montes Global Exchange, 1994
- 1.3 Carlos Montes Resume, 1992
- 1.4 Community Advisory Committee for the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, 1991-1993
- 1.5 Cuba Work, 1992-1994
- 1.6 Latino Unity Forum, 1992, 1994
- 1.7 Legal Defense Information 1993
- 1.8 PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza), 1993-1994
- 1.9 PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) Organization, u.d.
- 1.10 PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) Expenses, 1993-1994
- 1.11 PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) Membership, 1994
- 1.12 Three Strikes, 1994

Box 2

Series II: Legal Documents, 1968-1979

- 2.1 Biltmore 6 Court Documents Legal Motion, 1969-1971
- 2.2 C.C.S. Reports, 1968-1972
- 2.3 Court Transcript- State of California vs. Carlos Montes Biltmore Case 543-699, 1979
- 2.4 Court Transcript – State of California vs. Carlos Montes Biltmore Case 700-850, 1979
- 2.5 Concluding Arguments on Sanctions Motion and Discriminatory, 1979
- 2.6 Discover PDIP Hearing Motion Appeal FOIA Information, 1971-1978
- 2.7 ELA 13, Case Court Summary, 1968

Box 3

- 3.1 ELA 13, Motion to Quash Indictment Reporter's Transcripts of Proceedings Vol. 3 pages 527-835, 1968
- 3.2 ELA 13, Motion to Quash Indictment Reporter's Transcripts of Proceedings Vol. 3 pages 836-1010, 1968
- 3.3 ELA 13, Reporter's Transcript of Grand Jury Proceeding, 1968
- 3.4 Motion 995, ODD File, 955 Appeals, and Bail Motion, 1969, 1977-1978
- 3.5 Witness Interviews C.M. Affidavit Police Harassment, 1968-1978

Series III: Publications, 1948-2012

- 3.6 Latino Empowerment Los Angeles Postwar Dreams and Cold War Fears, 1948-1952
- 3.7 Los Angeles, 2012
- 3.8 Mexican Grassroots and Social Movements, u.d.

3.9 Miscellaneous Publications, 1990, 1997

3.10 Un-American Activities Report, 1970

Series IV: Newsletters, 1993-1994

3.10 Miscellaneous Newsletters, 1994

3.11 PODER (Proactive Organization Dedicated to Empowerment of Raza) Newsletter, 1993-1994

Series V: Clippings, 1941-1994

3.12 Clippings, 1941, 1977

3.13 Clippings, 1977-1978

3.14 Clippings, 1993-1994

3.15 Clippings, u.d.

Box 4

Oversized Newspaper Clippings, 1977, 1993-1994

Box 5

Series VI: Newspapers, 1969-2012

Fight Back! News and views from the People's Struggle, 2012

La Causa, 1969

La Causa (Carlos Montes Poster pg. 8), u.d.

La Raza (Ruben Salazar Murdered), u.d.

Tribune (Activist Enters Plea), 2011

Box 6

Series VII: Announcements & Flyers, 1977-2014

6.1 Announcements & Flyers, 1977-1978

6.2 Announcements & Flyers, 1993-1994, 1996

6.3 Announcements & Flyers, 2007, 2011, 2014

6.4 Announcements & Flyers, u.d.

Series VIII: Correspondence, 1979-1994

6.5 Correspondence, 1979, 1993-1994

Series IX: Scrapbook, 1977-1978

6.6 Scrapbook, 1977-1978

Box 7

Series X: Photographs, 1968-1980

Anti-Bakke Racism Protest March Rally, San Francisco, CA, 1971

Carlos Montes Speaking At MECHA Rally Ventura College, 1978

Police Files, 1968

Protest in Front of L.A. Criminal Court Building, 1978-1979

Miscellaneous photographs, 1978, 1980

Box 8

Series IX: Posters, u.d.

Defend the Right to Speak Freely! Hands off Carlos Montes! u.d.

Justice for Carlos Montes Committee and David Dominguez Justice Committee Presents: Benefit Dance, u.d.

Box 9

Series X: Ephemera, 1978

Button – Chicano Power, u.d.

Button – Image of Carlos Montes, u.d.

Banner – Sindicato Unico De Trabajadores De Autotransportes Urbanos De Pasajeros R100, u.d.

Raffle Tickets – Justice for Carlos Montes Committee, 1978