

CARTON 9:26

THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS

DELLUMS, MARVA

2002-2013

2017/193  
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## FAIR EMPLOYMENT &amp; HOUSING COMMISSION

1390 MARKET STREET, SUITE 410  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102  
(415) 557-2325



December 19, 1989

Ms. Marva Dellums  
and Family  
829 Brockhurst Street  
Oakland, CA 94608

Dear Marva,

We write on behalf of the current and former members of the Fair Employment and Housing Commission and the entire staff, to convey our deep regret for your loss and to express our gratitude for all your father has done for us and our sorrow at his passing.

Most of us came here long after the civil rights struggles in which he had played so dominant a role. We saw him first as an authentic hero from a more turbulent and vivid era. He was widely and justly honored for the extraordinary work he did in those times, and we revered him for it.

But we want to tell you, too, how much C.L. came to mean to us personally in his latter years on the Commission, and after he had left. For every Commission decision, he was -- and will continue to be -- our conscience and our guidepost. When he was still on the Commission and even more so after he was off, we would discuss every draft decision in terms of, "What would C.L. think about this one?" What would he see, based on his life experience and perspective, that we were missing? There was almost always something; our lives simply lacked the dimension and depth which your father's had, a dimension which allowed him to lead and us to follow. We knew that if we could answer our question that C.L. would approve of our draft decision, that we had been the staunchest advocates of civil rights. Anything less we knew would have met with a snort of disapproval from C.L.

One very special quality about C.L. was that, although he was so aware of and rooted in past civil rights struggles, he was not closed to the future or to new struggles. Over his 26-year span on the Commission, he had to deal with civil rights issues in his later years as a Commissioner that were unheard of in his earlier years, and he dealt with them well. For example, in 1982, C.L. sat through an entire three day sexual harassment hearing on a charge brought by a Black woman against her Black male boss. C.L. stated afterwards that the hearing had been a real eye opener for him and he had never before appreciated or really been aware of the problems faced by women in a male-dominated workplace. That case is now in the California Supreme Court and, to the day he died, he followed it closely and was

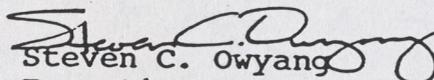
still hopeful of being able to get to the court to hear oral argument in it.

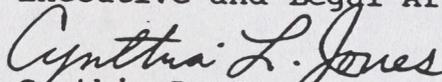
We valued C.L. most, though, for the moral force he gave our work. Everyone he worked with was moved and inspired by the depth of his commitment, by the adversity he had overcome, and by his astonishing lack of bitterness that the struggle had taken so long and was still so far from over. He never lost his passionate confidence in his cause, his clear eye for false friends and true allies, or his profound concern for the people the Fair Employment and Housing Act was intended to protect. That patient, unshakable commitment was the only true measure of all that we did, and still is. His example challenges and inspires us, makes us more wary of our compromises, less confident of our victories, and less despairing of our defeats.

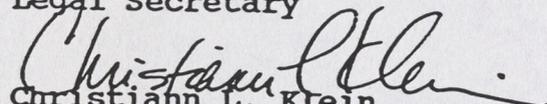
C.L. was matchless, essential, irreplaceable, and now that he is gone we will miss him very much indeed. There is no one who knows the stories that C.L. knew or who can give us the advice that C.L. could give. So we each grieve both our individual personal loss at C.L.'s passing and our collective loss at the yawning gap his absence makes in our lives as civil rights advocates.

We are grateful to have known your father. His death only recommits us to our work on the Commission. We are glad that you will be having a memorial service for your father next year. We want to honor your father with our presence there and tell you personally how much your dad meant to us. If we can help in the arrangements in any way, please let us know.

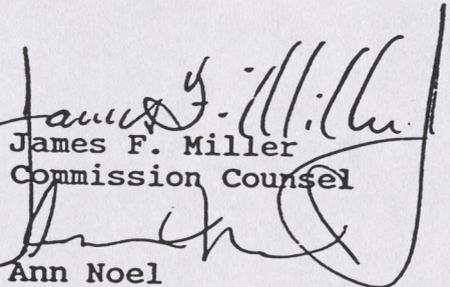
Sincerely,

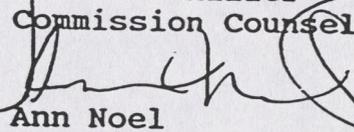
  
Steven C. Owyang  
Executive and Legal Affairs Secretary

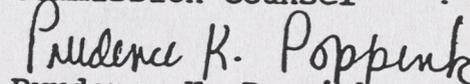
  
Cynthia L. Jones  
Legal Secretary

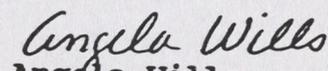
  
Christiann L. Klein  
Commission Counsel

  
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James F. Miller  
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Prudence K. Poppink  
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Angela Wills  
Legal Secretary

MARVA DELLUMS AFTERWORD ON C.L. October 2012

First and foremost, C.L. Dellums was my father. Strict, compassionate, and loving; he was a wonderful role model.

He applied his passion to his family as well as his fight for human rights. As a child, I learned from him the importance of education. "Never stop reading and learning," he would say to me on countless occasions. Through this process, he received his education after high school; he was self educated.

During my growing up years, he taught me to never give up. "There's nothing in this world you cannot do. You may not be the best, but you can do it, just apply yourself."

He wanted to make this a better world for his child and grandchildren, and as this <sup>remarkable</sup> incredible book reveals, he did just that. Through his efforts and dedication, he helped to open doors for all those oppressed by prejudice and segregation. C.L. Dellums had the intelligence, stamina, and passion to bring about changes in this country. Fired by his "spit and vinegar" personality (when necessary), he fought those who held down human beings from obtaining their basic human rights.

He was always available to the Pullman porters, no matter what day or what time, he was a man for the people as well as a husband, father, brother, son, uncle, and grandfather, he was always there for his family as well. Dad fought long and hard, and during his last days on earth, he still wanted to do some fighting. As he often said, "As long as there is inhumanity to man the fight is not over; fight on, faint not."

He is surely missed, but his work and his words will live on.

Thanks, Dad.

*to my mother*

*and oppression*  
*treatment*

*Is this  
start quote?  
on pullman*

## Afterword Marva Dellums ①

First and foremost, C.L. Dellums was my father. Strict, compassionate and loving, he was a wonderful role model.

He applied his passion to his family, as well as his fight for human rights. As a child, I learned from him the importance of education. "Never stop reading and learning," he would say to me on countless occasions. How right he was. Through this process, he received his education after high school, he was self educated.

During my growing up years, he taught me to never give up. "There's nothing in this world you cannot do, you may not be the best, but you can do it, just apply yourself."

He wanted to make this a better world for his child and grandchildren, and as this incredible book reveals, he did just that. Through his efforts and dedication, he helped to open doors for all those oppressed by prejudice and segregation. C.L. Dellums had the intelligence, stamina, and passion to bring about changes in this country. Fiercely by his spit and vinegar persona (when necessary), he fought those who held down human beings from obtaining their basic human rights.

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(p. 2)

(7)

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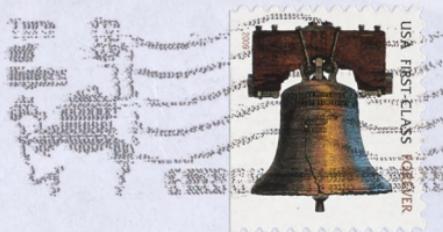
He is surely missed, but his work and his words will live on.  
Thanks Dad.

(2022)

Mr. Dellums  
4719-5<sup>th</sup> Ave. #5  
Sacramento, CA. 95823

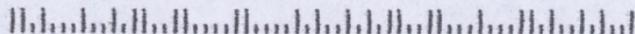
SACRAMENTO CA 957

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Mr. Robert Allen  
1130 Third Ave. #1104  
Oakland, CA. 94606

94606226079



Ch 7: FRIENDSHIP AND FAMILY LIFE

Family of the Sonnet

Annotations by  
Marva Dellums

Dellums was a struggle + struggle were intertwined  
home he came + struggle + struggle  
where the struggle

Struggle  
Both affirmed his work and his values as a human being. His home became a refuge, a place of rest and recovery, a place of struggle + strength. He

DELLUMS-RANDOLPH RELATIONSHIP

Over the years of working together Dellums and Randolph developed a strong bond, a feeling of mutual respect and admiration, and, ultimately, a deep friendship.

The two men would work together in the Brotherhood until Randolph's death in 1979

Dellums had an unshakeable faith in Randolph as the leader of the Brotherhood.

From their very first meeting in 1926 in Oakland Dellums thought Randolph was the man for the job. Oddly, the first thing that impressed Dellums upon meeting Randolph was how skinny he was. Years later Dellums told Randolph about that first impression:

*I told him I had that confidence in him the first time I saw him. He made a speech in Oakland in the latter part of January in 1926. He was as skinny as a rail. He was so tall and thin that once in a while he put his hand on his hip and it would gradually slide down. He was so thin, he didn't have a hip! [Laughs] I had to marvel at that.*

*I had read everything that I could get my hands on about revolutionary causes and revolutionary leaders, and one thing that always impressed me about the real revolutionary leaders of struggles was that they were always thin men. Never saw a fat one yet! I just deduced then that the fat ones never stuck because*

developed

*they worried too much about their stomachs. The little skinny ones didn't worry about missing meals. You could depend upon them. They would make sacrifices. I told this theory in the speech I made in Chicago.*

*Randolph asked me, "C.L., where in the devil did you get that from? I heard you make that speech in Chicago, where did you get it from?"*

*"Oh," I said, "I got part of it out of thin air. If one is going to rabble-rouse, one rabblerooses! One won't tell the truth about everything. But then," I said, "I've seen pictures of Nehru and Gandhi." The leaders of the Communist Party then in the States were thin, and from what pictures of the European Communists I had seen in those days, they were thin.*

*So he said, "Well, you know, I have thought back on the real revolutionary leaders, leaders who made sacrifices. When I say revolutionary I mean those that paid the price and stuck, not necessarily that they led a revolution," he said, "and invariably they were thin! I had never paid that any attention. I had never noticed." (DOH, 29)*

Dellums' curious theory of leadership aside, Randolph was soon impressed by Dellums hands-on leadership of the local. When Dellums ferreted out the theft of union funds by the secretary-treasurer of the local Randolph praised him and appointed him

to replace the disgraced officer. On subsequent occasions Randolph would rely on Dellums to play the role of troubleshooter.

Interestingly, Dellums became a kind of copy editor or rewrite man for some of Randolph's writings, particularly flyers and dispatches meant for porters. Randolph was a brilliant intellectual and a fine writer, as Dellums was quick to acknowledge, but there was a problem.

Working  
revolutionary

*We did discover that he had trouble writing propaganda for porters. He didn't speak an ordinary man's language and therefore he couldn't write it. So I jumped him about it, and I'd point out to him that "most of the porters wouldn't know what you're talking about! They just don't understand. You've got too many big words in here. You just don't use their language!" So for quite a while when Randolph wanted to get something out, so would send it to me and I would rewrite it for him. I didn't change anything. I'd just write it in my language, in everyday language, language that the working man could understand. As soon as I'd turn it in, he'd send it on. So it was just a question of a person I who was just so far intellectually and educationally above the men he was leading, that he did have trouble communicating with the men in writing, particularly because people can understand what they hear much easier than they can understand what they read. No matter how many big words you use in talking, they'll sit there and listen to you and they'll know pretty much what you are talking about. But when they've got to*

*read that on paper, you see, then they won't understand it at all, because they can't read well enough to understand it. So they wouldn't get enough out of it. After I started rewriting things for him like that, it was better.*

*The only things that I ever rewrote for him were form letters going out to the entire membership. And he began to catch on, if we stayed after him. Once in a while he could write leaflets that didn't have to be rewritten. After years of working on it he could write leaflets. But generally if he was going to get out a form letter, why, we'd rewrite it for him, take out what the boys used to call "the six-bit words" and put in some "two-bit words" [laughing], you know, ten cent words. (DOH, 37)*

On the occasions when Randolph visited the Bay Area he would join Dellums and his wife at their home for dinner, sometimes with other guests. Randolph was fond of Mrs. Dellums cooking, especially her lemon pie (Marva 6/16, 34) In addition to Randolph, Dellums' daughter, Marva, remembers Milton Webster, Roy Wilkins, and even Ralph Bunche as visitors to the Dellums home. "They'd all sit in the living room, and I'd wander in," she recalled. "My mother tried to get me out, and Randolph, in that deep, eloquent tone, he'd laugh and say, 'Leave her alone she's fine.'" These living room conversations gave young Marva a first inkling of who her father was in the world and what work he did. In his letters to Dellums Randolph sometimes

<sup>affirmed his</sup>  
~~acknowledged~~ <sup>warm</sup> his relationship <sup>with</sup> to the Dellums family by asking Dellums to “kindly remember me to Marva and Walter.” (APR to CLD, 3/3/59, Box 4, DP)

Dellums and Randolph would have long discussions about politics, civil rights and the Brotherhood. Dellums looked forward to his conversations with Randolph. In a letter Dellums lamented the infrequency of Randolph’s visits to the West Coast and he said he looked forward to coming east on a trip and having “more time together for our usual general discussions” (D to R 12/2/38, DP, Randolph, outgoing corres, 1934-40, carton 4) The two men corresponded frequently, and Dellums wrote detailed reports on activities and problems in his zone. While work was the focus of the correspondence there was still room for humor. When Randolph complained in a letter about the lack of stenographic services while traveling “in the hinterland of Texas – your home state,” (RtoD 12/14/38, DP, Randolph incoming, 1938-43, carton 4), Dellums replied, “I appreciate the lack of conveniences you have to put up with when you are traveling, and particularly when you are in foreign countries like Texas and Florida. I am a Californian and agree with General Sherman one hundred per cent, when he said that, if he owned Texas and Hell, he would rent out Texas and live in Hell.” (DtoR, DP, Randolph, outgoing, 1934-40, carton 4) Randolph had the final word: “Just a note to thank you for your letter . . . . I note you cynical comment on the Lone Star State. I would not be so drastic in my consignment of this section of our

great country since it gave birth to our most militant Brotherhood leader who presides over the Pacific coast.” (RtoD, DP, Randolph incoming, 1938-43, carton 4)

From early on Dellums worried about Randolph's health. Randolph was subject to fainting spells and was diagnosed with a heart condition. On his first trip to Chicago as BSCP organizer he collapsed during a meeting. (Anderson, 9. 177) His health was a matter of concern to all the BSCP officers. After one episode Dellums wrote that he was “seriously concerned” about Randolph’s physical condition and urged him to heed his doctor’s advice and “take it easy for the next year or two until such time as medical examination shows that your heart has stopped skipping beats.” (DtoR, 7/31/51, DP, Randolph outgoing, Carton 4)

When times were hard for the Brotherhood they were also hard for the officers. Including Randolph. When his wife’s beauty-parlor business collapsed during the depression Randolph had only his BSCP salary of \$10 a week, and that was not reliable. At times he was nearly penniless. Dellums recalled that on visits to Oakland Randolph “came out sometimes with just his fare, one way. He had nothing else. He did not even have a change of socks or underwear. Sometimes he would sleep at my house, and my wife would look around for his socks and his underwear, and she wouldn’t see any. Later on, when she went into the bathroom, she would see his socks and underwear all washed and hanging up to dry. And his shirts were frayed around

the collar. But he still had that dignified bearing; he didn't care what his clothes looked like." (Aneerson, 214)

Dellums had unbounded affection for Randolph who served as a kind of older brother and mentor. He was fiercely loyal to the older man and thought of him as the best possible leader for the BSCP. The occasional differences between them were minor compared with their overall political compatibility. Dellums got enormous satisfaction and meaning from working with the Brotherhood under Randolph's leadership.

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#### FAMILY LIFE

*(The following two sections are based mainly on interviews with Marva Dellums.)*

In addition to enjoying the company of a Randolph and a few friends, Dellums spent most of his free time with his family. A daughter, Marva, was born in 1944. At the time C.L. was 44 and his wife, Walter, was 43. Walter had been pregnant before but she lost the children. Marva came as something of a surprise. She was born in the family home, a modest house on Brockhurst Street an area of West Oakland where many other porters were buying homes.

Growing up Marva remembers sitting with her parents at breakfast every morning and listening to their conversations. They subscribed to several newspapers and publications, including the national African American newspaper, *The Pittsburgh*

The reporters would voluntarily collect money to help Dellums if they felt it was necessary. That's loyalty!

Courier, and, of course, *The Black Worker*, the BSCP monthly publication. Sometimes Dellums would hand a paper to Marva and have her practice reading a section aloud. During the day Dellums was usually at the Brotherhood office on Seventh street, and since Dellums income was sometimes uncertain, Walter continued to work as a maid while Marva was in school.

As soon as I was know to be coming, (as it was a surprise), My mother stayed home with me.

Other family members lived nearby including Dellums' cousin, ~~Gene~~ <sup>Jean</sup> Robinson, and his brother Verney. There was a lot of going back and forth between the households. Marva's childhood playmates included Jill Robinson, the daughter of the cousin, and ~~Teresa~~ <sup>Theresa</sup> and Ron Dellums, Verney's children.

~~Marva's mother~~ <sup>Walter</sup> loved to joke and play and have a good time, but she was reserved around C.L., Marva recalls. Marva and ~~Walter~~ <sup>her mother</sup> sometimes went away on vacations but Dellums never took a vacation. The only days he took off from work were Sundays, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. He was also involved with the Prince Hall Masons and the Elks. When he took time off, or while driving on a trip, C.L. loved listening to music. His favorite song was ~~Nat "King" Cole's "Unforgettable."~~ <sup>Gertrude "Always"</sup> He and Walter also enjoyed dancing. C.L. taught Marva how to Waltz while Walter taught her the Charleston. On Friday nights Dellums liked to go to the Oakland ~~Coliseum~~ <sup>Auditorium</sup> to watch the fights with his friend, Jewell Brown, a porter.

Walter, who was a Catholic, and Marva attended church together on Sundays but C.L. did not. He left Marva's religious instruction to Walter. Marva was baptized as a

Catholic when she was seven. After initially attending public school, her parents transferred her in the fourth grade to Sacred heart Catholic school. They felt she wasn't being challenged in the public school. Marva graduated from Sacred Heart but by then her ~~interest~~ <sup>affinity with</sup> in Catholicism was waning. In fact, she remembers, "I guess I was a rebel in my own way because during catechism I generally would say something that really made the nuns angry." Marva had lots of questions for the nuns, a trait she says she got from her father. "I eventually left the Catholic church because they couldn't give me answers."

Marva's critical outlook and her stand-up attitude were encouraged by C.L. In the face of mistreatment or attempts to hold her back C.L. taught her to stand up for herself. The first sentence C,L, taught Marva to speak when she was only 18 months old was, "I know my rights!," accompanied by vigorous pounding on the table with her little fist. " (Marva has a photo of herself at three years old doing just this.) "It's an attitude I've carried with me all my life." (Marva2, p. 31)

C.L. ~~had a Model T Ford~~ <sup>2 out of the time</sup> ~~which he loved and drove everywhere~~. He was often <sup>road</sup> away from home on trips around the West Coast required by his work with Brotherhood and the NAACP. He never took Walter or Marva on these trips because he feared for their safety. Anonymous threats had been made against C.L. and Walter. These absences were made a ~~little~~ <sup>little</sup> more tolerable to Marva because when Dellums was at home it was quality time. She loved his attention, <sup>including</sup> ~~and~~ that he helped her with her

homework, until she got to geometry when he told her, "You're on your own now!" Dellums tried unsuccessfully to teach Walter to drive the car, but she didn't like driving because she said it scared her to death. She used trolleys, buses, ~~and~~ taxis, <sup>walking</sup> and to get herself and Marva around town.

*Both Dellums mother and Walter's mother*

*the family* Marva ~~got to know her grandmothers because both~~ lived at different times with ~~her~~ parents. (pp 3, 29-31; Marva2, 20-28) In 194<sup>1947</sup>(??) Dellums brought his aging mother, Emma, to Oakland. She lived with the family until she passed in 1949. When Walter's mother, Parilee, became ill in 1953 C.L. encouraged Walter to bring her from Texas to live with the family in Oakland. Parilee lived with the family for two years before dying of cancer. Marva remembers that Parilee was so meticulous that she washed and ironed Marva's socks using a big flat iron she had brought from Texas. Marva was delighted by the presence of her grandmothers. Both of them read her stories from the Bible. Emma would take Marva on her lap in a big rocking chair and give her a slice of an orange or apple to nibble on while Emma ~~read~~ <sup>re-read</sup> dramatic <sup>renditions</sup> of biblical tales, as she had read to C.L. and his brothers many years before.

Although Walter tended to be reserved around Dellums she could hold her own in verbal confrontations. Marva remembers her parents at time being "verbally volatile with each other. I think that's what attracted them to one another because neither of them backed down. My mother's education only went as far as the eighth grade, but

she could out-read my father. So they balanced one another out. My mother was real, down to earth, feet on the ground, just a home-body type. My father was just the opposite, speaking and traveling, and my mother never went with him [but] from early on she realized what he was doing and she supported that." (p. 21) Walter used to tell her daughter, "I'm not as educated as your father, but I'm just as smart." Marva considered herself as having gotten the best traits of both parents: "Stubborn but tactful, diplomatic and real." Although after Marva's birth Dellums told Walter that ~~she~~ <sup>stayed</sup> should be at home <sup>to raise</sup> with the child, ~~she continued to work and she was active with the~~ <sup>she continued to be</sup> BSCP Women's auxiliary and with the Eastern Star's, the women's auxiliary to the <sup>Prince Hall</sup> Masons.

<sup>appearance</sup> ~~clothing~~ Dellums had definite ideas about clothing and what clothing said about the person. His father had been a very meticulous man and careful about the way he dressed. C.L. was similarly meticulous. Always well dressed, usually wearing a three-piece suit and tie, Dellums ~~was a member of that group of labor leaders who believed that personal~~ <sup>leadership and</sup> and organizational success ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> facilitated by personal appearance and demeanor.

Dellums thought that a well-groomed successful-looking <sup>labor</sup> leader who carried himself <sup>an advantage</sup> with dignity and spoke with confidence would have a ~~leg up~~ <sup>leg up</sup> in confronting employers <sup>and power</sup> who sought to intimidate workers with the trappings of bourgeois respectability. He played the game well and never let the bosses get the upper hand in that public arena of contestation that sociologist Erving Goffman referred to as the "presentation of self in

*Footnote*

everyday life." Marva remembers that when her father mowed the lawn he wore his suit pants, vest, and dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up. There were two things he wouldn't wear, Marva said, neither overalls nor a tuxedo <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ acceptable to him.

When Walter wanted Marva to be a debutante, Dellums' response was, "No. We're not that type of people. Plus, you're not going to get me in a monkey suit!" *He was also protecting me from public display for safety reasons -*

C.L. was careful about his use of language, something he had learned from his debating days and from his mentor, Randolph. Dellums cultivated a manner of speaking that ~~communicated~~ <sup>suggested</sup> East Coast, Ivy League education. (Ron Dellums interview, 12-13)

At the same time, he could be pugnacious and swear like a sailor when ~~that~~ <sup>it</sup> suited his purpose. He also had his own take on what black people should call themselves and why. He didn't like the word "black." "No one's black or white," he told Marva, "We're all colored. All men are colored." He preferred the word "Negro", Marva said, because to him that meant a person of multicultural background. We're multicultural." Dellums believed that in the Americas Africans of different ethnic groups had forged new cultural bonds among themselves and with some Indians and whites to create a new multicultural race. He delighted in telling whites who claimed their ancestors came over on the Mayflower that it was some of his ancestors who met them when they arrived!

In her early teens Marva began to develop a more mature appreciation of her father and the importance of his work. She gradually learned the charming visitors to her

home, such as A. Philip Randolph, Roy Wilkins, Ralph, Bunche, Tarea Pittman Milton Webster, Thurgood Marshall and others, who came to meet with her father, enjoy her mother's good cooking, and sometimes play with her, were important figures in black community life. On one occasion Dellums invited Marva, then thirteen, to attend a NAACP convention at which he was going to speak. She was to be an usher and show people in the enormous Oakland ~~Coliseum~~ <sup>Auditorium</sup> crowd to their seats and give them programs. Walter bought a special dress for her to wear to the event. She was thrilled and as she watched Thurgood Marshall and Roy Wilkins, men she had met at her parents home, come to the podium to address the crowd. And then her father rose to speak. "That's the first time I heard him speak," she recalls, "and I was absolutely dumfounded. It was incredible. I was inspired. It's like relishing something sweet in your mouth, and you just sit there kind pondering over it. And, wow! He's more than just Dad!" (p. 33) To Marva's surprise, <sup>who</sup> ~~Walter~~ <sup>she was in the audience</sup> arranged a ploy for her to go onto the stage to make a donation and be proudly introduced by her father as his daughter. The crowd roared with delight; many were surprised to learn that C.L. had a daughter, so guarded had he been about his family. Her curiosity driven by her new view of her father, Marva began paying closer attention to the articles he gave her to read. Both of her parents started talking with her more seriously about the work of the Brotherhood and the NAACP.

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## PASSING OF C.L.

By 1968, when Randolph stepped down and Dellums was elected president of the Brotherhood, the growth of air travel and the building of interstate highways were causing a ~~serious~~<sup>huge</sup> drop off in railroad passenger travel. The loss of railroad passengers led to the inevitable decline of the Brotherhood. With the huge blows of the death of his wife in 1974 due to cancer and the death of 90-year-old Randolph in 1979, C.L. decided it was time to step down. In 1978, The BSCP merged with the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks (CHECK NAME). Dellums stayed on for a year as a consultant during the transition period. Marva recalls that he was deeply saddened by the passing of Walter and the loss of Randolph and the Brotherhood. C.L. was still doing FEPC work, which gave him a lot of satisfaction, and which he continued until 1986. He also found comfort in his grandchildren. Marva had married at age 16 and had six children by then. Dellums loved his grandchildren. He especially enjoyed telling them stories that always held their rapt attention. In the absence of Walter, Marva and her father became even closer as friends. She remembered that they would sometimes talk for hours on end; he could easily spend hours with the children as well.

Dellums never gave up the fight. And he fought for everyone. Marva recalls his staunch support for Cesar Chavez and the struggling farmworkers union."Till the day of his death," she said, "he wouldn't buy grapes." He expected that same commitment to the cause from his grandchildren. During a strike by Safeway workers he queried

his grandchildren, by then teenagers (CHECK), to make sure they hadn't crossed the picket line.

Although his spirit remained strong his health was failing. *first heart attack about 33* Over the years he had suffered five heart attacks, and he had to accept the necessity of slowing down.. He once told Marva, "I just don't have the strength to get out there and fight anymore. Oh, I wish I had the strength to fight." That was his only complaint, that he regretted not being able to do more for the struggle. (Marva2, 28) C.L. never lost his sense of humor, which Marva employed to cheer him up. She recalled when her father was hospitalized after a heart attack and all sorts of tubes and wires were attached to his body to monitor his vital signs. "The only way to really make an impression on my father when he's not feeling good is to make him laugh," Marva recounted. So I walked into the hospital room and *saw* ~~see~~ all this stuff attached to him, and I said, 'Dad, if there was a fire in here, you'd have a helluva time getting outta here,' and he just started laughing!" The nurse came running in because his heart monitor was going wacky. She says, 'Are you all right?" He's still laughing with tears running down his face, and he said 'They didn't ask me whether I wanted to die or not. I'm not going anywhere.' He had this attitude that he could overcome anything. And I think he did."

(2, p. 30)

Only one obstacle could he not overcome. C.L. Dellums died on *December 6,* ~~November 8,~~ 1989, *heart and pulmonary failure* at the age of 89, after suffering a heart attack in Oakland, his home since 1923.

When asked how she would describe her father's legacy, Marva Dellums replied: "I would say it is the ability to make a choice, which we didn't have before. We can go where we want to go. We can enter any college we want to enter. He gave these generations the ability to choose which path they want to take, and not be limited by what they are given. Of course, sometimes you have to push through, but we should never hold ourselves back. Never say, 'I can't do that.' My Dad told me, 'Do not have that word in your vocabulary. I don't ever want to hear you say 'can't.' There's nothing on this earth you can't do. You might not be the best at it, but you can do it.'"

"I'm passing this on to my grandchildren." (2, 38-40)

OTHER SECTIONS STILL TO COME –

SECTION ON NNC

SECTION ON NAACP & ANTIDISCRIMINATION CASES

SECTION OF FEPC

CONCLUSION

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

July 15, 2002

Subject: Cottrell Laurence Dellums (popularly known as C.L. Dellums)

Requester: Marva Dellums (Daughter of Subject)  
39867 Fremont Blvd. #101  
Fremont, CA 94538

Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Records Management Division - FOIA/PA Office  
9<sup>th</sup> & Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20535

I hereby request one copy of any and all records in your files concerning my father, C.L. Dellums, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act. Please check all indexes.

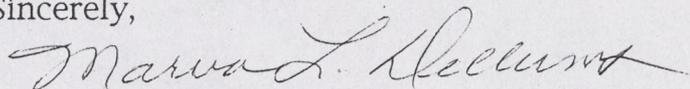
C.L. Dellums was born Cottrell Laurence Dellums on January 3, 1900, in Corsicana, Texas. He died <sup>December</sup> ~~November~~ 8, 1989, in Oakland, California. In 1923 he moved from Texas to Oakland, CA, where he lived for the remainder of his life.

I am especially interested in records relating to the following:

1. The period from 1925 to 1980 when C.L. Dellums was a leader of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Union. From 1929 he served as an International Vice President, and was elected President in 1968.
2. In the period from 1930 to 1972 he was head of the Alameda County Branch (later known as the Oakland Branch) of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored people (NAACP), and from 1947 to 1966 he was chairman of the West Coast Regional Office of the NAACP.
3. In the period from 1943 to 1959 C.L. Dellums was chairman of the California Committee for Fair Employment Practices.
4. In the period from 1959 to 1985 C.L. Dellums was a member of the California Fair Employment Practices Commission.
5. Other organizations with which he was associated at various times included the National Negro Congress, the American Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO), the March on Washington Movement, the Oakland Council for Civic Unity and the California Federation for Civic Unity, and the Negro American Labor Council.

I hope this information will be helpful in locating any files pertaining to my father. Although the above periods and organizations are of special interest, I am requesting copies of all documents related to Cottrell Laurence Dellums in your files.

Sincerely,



Marva Dellums

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR MARVA DELLUMS

Please describe the family backgrounds from which your parents came.

Mother (Walter)

Father (C.L.)

racial ancestry background

- Describe/discuss:
  - Walter's parents *maiden name?*
  - Her name *if (how chosen)*
  - When and where she born
  - Her upbringing, *siblings*
  - School
  - Early work
  - Interests
  - Turning points
  - When, why came to Oakland
  - How she met CL, courtship, marriage

same Qs

*influence of her mother on her public speaking*

Marva as a Child

- Describe/discuss:
  - When/where born
  - Earliest memories of her parents
  - What was their household like
  - Daily life at home
  - Describe her upbringing
  - Schools
  - Any jobs
  - Interests
  - How was she treated by parents
  - Major events of childhood
  - Earliest awareness of CL's work life
  - Experiences with CL's friends/colleagues/relatives
    - Randolph, Webster, Walter Gordon, Frances Albrier, Carleton Goodlett, Willie Brown, in-laws, her uncles, others

*Marva has stayed of CL's upbringing of her parents*

*Go over FOIA request with Marva Dellums next mtg*

*Does she have <sup>any</sup> hopes of their ~~discussing~~ <sup>discussing</sup> with Randolph, Webster?*

*Tarea Pittman*

Marva in Adult Life

Describe/discuss

*Did CL hope/plan to go to college?*

How did her father treat her as she grew up; did it change over time?

Her relationship with her mother

Favorite anecdotes about CL/Walter

What was their relationship like; how did it change over time.

What were the challenges of being CL Dellums' daughter.

Did she go to her father's office or brotherhood events. Did he tell her about his work life. *His hillside parlor?*

In later years how did your relationship with your father change?develop?

His relationship with Walter

Impact of mother's illness/death

Remembrances regarding impact of major events/individuals *ON C.L.*

World War I *Migration to West coast*

Great Depression

1934 SF Waterfront strike

World War II/ FDR

Attitude toward working with Communists

Relationship to Black Freedom/Civil Rights movement, esp. MLK, Malcolm X, Black Panthers

Views of political leaders: FDR, Earl Warren, Pat Brown, Reagan,,

Jerry Brown, JFK, LBJ, Carter, Willie Brown, Burtons

Vietnam War

Additional thoughts about CL's relationship with

BSCP

NAACP

FEPC

Dems/Repubs

CPUSA

Church

CL's favorite food, drink, recreational activity, sport, pets,  
sayings/apophorisms, writers, commentators, spare time activity

Distinctive mannerisms?

Socially active person? Friends, parties, clubs, masons, trips,  
vacations, special events

Marva's later life:

Marriage, family, work

Impact of death of each parent. Nature of <sup>funeral + burial</sup> service for each

Her life today

Summing up:

What did CL think were his most important contributions to the  
organizations and causes he worked with.

What did he regard as his single biggest success. Failure/set back  
What were the most important continuing social/political issues to  
him?

What would you say was the most important or notable thing about  
his character and personality. *What kind of man?*

What was the main way he affected/influenced other people

Who were his heroes?

What was his main impact on Marva (and her children)

What is his legacy

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- Ula Taylor

Robert ALLEN <rlallen@berkeley> 11:36 AM (0 minutes ago)

to poppo11, bcc: me

Hi Marva,

Just a quick note to let you know that I heard back from the publisher, and he thinks the book is excellent. He will follow up regarding plans for publication.



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From: "poppol1@juno.com" <poppol1@juno.com>  
Subject: Corrections  
Date: Sat, October 13, 2012 11:55 am  
To: rlallen@berkeley.edu

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Here are the corrections from the biography: pg.10; Kitty was full blooded Cherokee, not half.pg. 24; end of first paragraph, Dad told me he did suffer from seasickness, while working on the ships. pg. 24, last paragraph; I do not know the source of my mother's name (Walter). Also I do not know what her father Joseph was classified as, my grandmother was a single parent, never married Joseph, they never lived together, my grandmother raised my mother alone, until she married Mr. Cavender (do not know the date). These are the only corrections in the book, I think it is wonderful. Will send you my writing in a separate envelope, from the agreement, will put both in mail on Monday coming.

---

Woman is 53 But Looks 25

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<http://thirdpartyoffers.juno.com/TGL3131/5079b974a495d397462ffst01vuc>

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**Attachments:**

untitled-[2]	
Size:	1.3 k
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