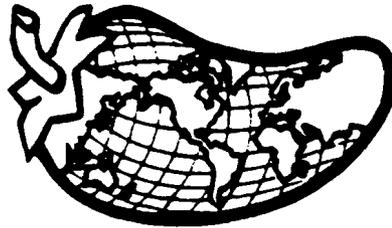


CASI



August 25, 1984

Dear Chilihead:

There have been many questions brought up in the last few months, and perhaps not enough answers. There will apparently be two chili cook-offs in Terlingua this year, each claiming to be THE 18th Annual Terlingua Championship. Until now, my position as the Executive Administrator of the Chili Appreciation Society International has been to ignore, to turn the other cheek, and to refrain from addressing the defection to "behind the store in '84."

But many people are confused, uninformed, or misinformed. Over 80% of the competition chili cooks today have been cooking in CASI cookoffs for only six years or less. Many of these cooks don't know from whence we came--or where we're going--or why. Hopefully, this letter will answer some questions and shine some light on the situation at hand.

A little over a year ago there were all sorts of rumors going around that a new organization had been formed with the intention of undermining CASI (or C.A.S.I., or CASI, Inc. -- however you wish to spell it, abbreviate it and/or punctuate it), and taking over the Terlingua Chili Cookoff. The name of this organization, according to rumors was O.W.C.C.A.T. (Original World Championship Chili Cookoff At Terlingua.)

These rumors were flatly denied by all of those rumored to be involved. They said there was no such organization and that they had no such intentions.

But the fact is, THERE WAS SUCH A GROUP (and this group still exists and is still actively working to destroy the CASI organization and take over the Terlingua cookoff): It is a matter of public record!

One June 2, 1983, a charter was applied for with the State of Texas to form a corporation by the name of The Original World Championship Chili Cookoff Inc. The application listed three men as the officers of the corporation and these three men signed the application: JIM REDD, FRANK X. TOLBERT, and DICK WRIGHT. The charter was granted on July 1, 1983.

A short time later a lawsuit was filed by the International Chili Society (ICS) against the group calling itself O.W.C.C.A.T. for using the word "world" in conjunction with a chili cookoff. Consequently, the name O.W.C.C.A.T. was dropped before it was ever used openly, but the organization continued.

They continued in their efforts to undermine CASI (however you chose to spell, abbreviate, or punctuate it) and they continued in their efforts to destroy the CASI Terlingua Chili Cookoff. But they didn't have a name.

Then, to add to the confusion, the O.W.C.C.A.T. group decided to also call themselves CASI -- and claim to be the "real" one. That's right! They took the name of the group they were out to destroy.

Last November, they held a cookoff in Terlingua, Texas, behind Arturo's Store, in direct oppositon to the 17th Annual CASI Terlingua Championship. They claimed that their group of defectors was the "real" Terlingua Cookoff, headed up by O.W.C.C.A.T. (except not using that name) and sponsored by Wolf Brand Chili, a divison of Quaker Oats, Inc.

Many thousands of dollars earmarked for charity were lost by the CASI cookoff and the Terlingua Trust Fund, thanks to the destructive efforts of this group of defectors.

The Terlingua Trust Fund is set up as a non-profit organization to better the living conditions in the Terlingua area. Last year, through the efforts of the C.A.S.I. Terlingua Chili Cookoff, the Terlingua Trust Fund was able to donate a \$50,000 ambulance to the members of the Terlingua/Big Bend community -- but not without a great deal of struggle, causing several of the cookoff originators to have to dig deep into their own pockets to make this dream a reality; for, thanks to the destructive efforts of members of the defection, who wrote numerous letters to many of the sponsors, some of the sponsors in the resulting confusion backed out. A camping equipment company, a western clothing manufacturing company and several others, took threats from the defectors to heart and chose not to participate.

So, not only did the defectors behind the store fail to donate any money from their cookoff to charity, but they made it harder for the Terlingua Trust Fund and CASI to fulfill their promises to the residents of the Big Bend area. But thanks to the generosity of the remaining sponsors of the CASI cookoff, (Dodge, Shelby, Chili's, Pepsico, Stroh's and Gebhardts) the people who live out in Terlingua--80 miles from the nearest medical facility--now have an ultra-modern ambulance at their service.

This ambulance, provided to the community by the Terlingua Trust Fund, through the efforts of the CASI cooks, in spite of attempts to blockade it by the group of defectors has certainly earned it's keep, in less than a year.

A recent report from John Alexander, the director of the Terlingua Medics, reflected the need and the use of "our" ambulance. "In the last 10 months;" he said, "The new ambulance has made:

seven clearly lifesaving missions;
160 field missions;
40 emergency transports to Alpine; and
one emergency transport to a Houston medical facility."

Each of these missions was made thanks to the efforts of CASI, CASI cooks, the cookoff sponsors, and the Terlingua Trust Fund.

Along with the fun, the friendship, and the good chili it generates, CASI is probably proudest of the contributions to charity we are able to make. Whether it is the March of Dimes or other national charities, or the smaller local charities, such as the Terlingua Medics, the Flatonia Clinic, or the Kingsville Volunteer Fire Department, CASI cooks like the feeling that their fun and frivolity is contributing toward worthwhile causes.

The new organization that held their cookoff, behind Arturo's Store in Terlingua in 1983, in direct opposition to the 17th Annual CASI Terlingua Championship at Glen Pepper's Villa De La Mina, as far as I have been able to determine, DID NOT DONATE A PENNY TO ANY CHARITY.

And the defection, in some sort of a vain attempt to justify their existance, denies credit to a number of deserving CASI members who got it all started. The defection claims that Frank Tolbert started the Terlingua Cookoff (and some may, out of pure ignorance, believe that he did), but he simply did not. He was there with all those other CASI members. He served as referee, but he did not start it or conceive it--as he later claimed. It is untrue, just as it is untrue that he got chili named the state dish of Texas (as he claimed on page 191 in his book, "Tolbert's Texas"). Yeller Dog Marsh did that with hundreds of witnesses. Tolbert was not involved in the planning or the politics of this. He was at least involved in the first Terlingua Cookoff, and later became a director--but it was never "Frank's cookoff", as members of the defection would have you to believe.

It has also been claimed that Frank Tolbert founded CASI. This is another piece of mis-information. Frank Tolbert had absolutely nothing to do with the founding of CASI. CASI was founded in 1939. The credit for the inception of the Chili Appreciation Society International belongs totally to George Haddaway, who currently resides in Lindale, Texas.

The defection claimed last year to have had "the cooks" at their "Behind The Store" cookoff. True, they did have approximately 10 more cooks than the CASI Championship, but many of these were not qualified under CASI rules. Some were ICS cookoff winners, some were unqualified past state champions and still others were simply friends of the directors. The CASI Championship at Villa De La Mina had 49 entries, all of whom had qualified under CASI rules through CASI sanctioned cookoffs, abiding by CASI rules as set forth by the CASI Great Peppers at their annual meeting. Every cook at the CASI Championship at Terlingua knew last year, as they know this year, that they were competing against only qualified cooks, under the same rules, and by the same guidelines. The "Behind The Store Wolf Brand Chili Cookoff" was not a sanctioned cookoff.

And the defection has recently added to the confusion with the infusion of what they call "Tolbert Rules." No one knows who conceived these, if indeed anyone did at all. Do you know anyone involved in writing these? Do you know anybody who has seen a copy of these? One thing is for certain. They have never been presented to the Great Peppers for approval. And you don't have to be a genius to understand that you can't go by two sets of rules at the same time. You simply can not have and ICS/CASI cookoff for example. You must follow one set of rules or the other.

And let me make one more point. The CASI Terlingua Cookoff will still be held at Glenn Pepper's Villa de la Mina, just as it has been since 1977. We have not moved nor do we have any plans to move. Also, Bill Neale, David Witts, and Carroll Shelby-- All of whom are founders and originators of the Original Terlingua Cookoff--are still involved; not with some spin-off behind some store, but with the CASI event which has been held at Villa de la Mina since it was moved from it's original site in 1977.

So make up your mind which cookoff you want to attend, or don't attend either. You get a choice between CASI's 18th Annual Terlingua Championship at Glen Pepper's Villa de la Mina or the 2nd Annual Behind the Store Cookoff. That is a matter of preference. But you don't get a choice when it comes to the facts, and the facts are clear.

It is not the wish nor the desire of CASI to be vindictive toward the new chili organization. We do not wish to retaliate against them and we wish them no harm in any way. In fact, we support them in anything positive that they might do. There can not be too much money raised for worthy charities. But we do resent the new organization trying to discredit CASI-- trying to confuse people by making an issue of such insignificant things as how one spells, abbreviates, or punctuates CASI-- trying to confuse people with contradictory terms such as "Tolbert/CASI Rules"-- trying to destroy the Terlingua CASI Chili Cookoff simply to further their own ends-- confusing the public as to the origins of the Terlingua event--and not giving credit where credit is due to those CASI members who pulled off the first one.

Hopefully, this letter has filled some informational voids and has helped to eliminate some of the confusion forced by just a handful of dissidents. I personally hope you will go to whichever cookoff you will feel the happiest at. We certainly don't want anyone at the CASI cookoff who does not want to be there. By the same token, we would hate to see you go to The 2nd Annual "Behind The Store" because you have been misinformed. We want you to go wherever you feel the most comfortable, but please--allow everyone else to do the same thing.

Sincerely,



H. Ray King
Executive Administrator

November 11,

To C.V. Wood and Carroll Shelby.

We seem to be operating two chili tournaments at Terlingua.

Anyway, David Witts, Bill Neale, Tolbert, Shahan are trying to see that the Wick Fowler Memorial Cookoff functions without some personality hogging the spotlight.

C.V. Wood and Carroll Shelby are promoters of something which should be called the annual C.V. Wood Show.

The idea for the Terlingua cookoff was mine, although Shelby told a different story on CBS Saturday. (I have the clippings to show that it all began in my column.)

Right now, though, I'm about ready to quit as far as any ~~more co more~~ more cookoffs at Terlingua are concerned.

MORE

Wood-Shelby-2

I resign.

Why don't you fellows stage it in California and save the freight/?

Judging by the ~~the~~ Heywood Broun thing Terlingua this ~~year~~ year was an all-California show.

The CBS crew came because of my magazine article. Broun's people wanted me for two weeks for information, and I sent them copies of my chili book -- at CBS' request.

And then what happens? Wood and Shelby take all the bows. Shelby tells the camera that "a bunch of us fellers started the cookoff as an adult Woodstock."

Woodstock ~~is~~ happened two years after Terlingua.

David Witts brought 95 per cent of the media to the cookoff, paid to get the {power on, and paid for security officers. And he doesn't try to "project" himself at the ~~the~~ cookoff.

MORE

Wood-Shelby-3 /

Wood insulted the judges. Actually there were cook book authors and one food editor in the ~~crowd~~ crowd. Most of them have been judges in ^{state} ~~national~~ cookoffs. Dick

Hitt, one of the judges, wrote in his column:

"The chief judge, C.V. Wood, a former chili champion himself, felt there were too many judges. At least three of the judges felt there were too many chief judges."

Anyway, that judging panel you bemeaned in Captain

~~Bligh~~ language picked a ~~damn~~ damned good champion.

~~Wood~~ Wood and Shelby can carry on without me.

Frank Tolbert

F. Tolbert

November 29, 1974

C.V.: I think you can return to Terlingua as a
contestant. As a judge, no. That magazine puff
in which you pushed everyone aside did it.

As I told you in my previous (and unanswered) letter,
I'm bowing out, too.

Frank Tolbert

Franks