

## Farm Workers

# Teamsters Take a Half Step Back

DELANO, Calif.—The fierce jurisdictional battle between Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters seemed to cool off last week. But like the lull in many battles, this one wasn't the result of a victory in the fields. It was negotiated behind the scenes. And in many negotiations, these seem to be linked not only to the immediate question—which union can represent the farm worker—but to a broader issue, the relationship between the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations and the Teamsters, expelled by the A.F.L.-C.I.O. in 1957.

On Tuesday, Teamster Inter-

tional President Frank E. Fitzsimmons formally repudiated contracts experienced Teamster organizer James W. Smith had signed on Aug. 9 with 30 table grape growers here. Mr. Smith was not "authorized" to ink those contracts, Mr. Fitzsimmons's letter to the growers said: the Teamsters "have no interest in organizing your employes in the vineyards in and around Delano, Calif." And on Thursday, Mr. Chavez said in Washington that he had information which led him to believe Mr. Fitzsimmons was acting in good faith.

Last week's restrained tone was in marked contrast to that of the past months. As the U.F.W.'s hard-won contracts with the California grape growers have been expiring this year, the growers have been signing not with the U.F.W., but with the Teamsters. Mr. Chavez has accused the Teamsters of negotiating "sweetheart contracts." Mr. Fitzsimmons has asserted in turn that the U.F.W. was seeking to "represent farmworkers with propaganda." And George Meany, president of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., which has contributed \$1.6-million to the U.F.W. for strikers' benefits this year, has called the Teamsters' actions in California "despicable."

But Mr. Fitzsimmons's statement on Tuesday came only a day after his fourth meeting with Mr. Meany since June 26 on the Teamsters' jurisdictional dispute with the U.F.W. There is speculation that Mr. Fitzsimmons is attempting to appease Mr. Meany with some concessions in California as part of a Teamster campaign to regain admission to the A.F.L.-C.I.O.

The Teamsters, however, have not repudiated any of the other contracts signed with growers this year. And on Wednesday, they announced they were going to start organizing the 5,000 tomato pickers in the San Diego area.

While declaring himself "encouraged" by last week's contract repudiation in Delano, Mr. Chavez said the U.F.W.'s conflict with the Teamsters was "not over by a long shot." The United Farm Workers is continuing and expanding its organization of nationwide boycotts of lettuce and grapes, not carrying the U.F.W. Black Eagle symbol.

The growers have contended that their contracts with the U.F.W. have been badly administered. Recently, John Giumarra Sr., executive vice president of Giumarra Vineyards, California's largest table grape grower and one of the 30 who signed Teamster contracts Aug. 9, when their U.F.W. contracts expired, said: "I don't think the growers will ever sign with ~~U.F.W.~~ (Chavez) again."

Now the Delano growers are furious with the Teamsters as well, calling them "hypocrites" and charging that they have "double-crossed the workers."

—HENRY WEINSTEIN