

Boycott Memo from Jim Drake/Mike Miller – Suggested Boycott Tactics c. January 1966

Boycott Memo: Suggestions for boycott tactics based on reports of successes.

To: All boycott people From: Jim Drake–Mike Miller

To be successful you need your own army of boycotters who will do the hard work. The bigger the army the bigger the success. But don't sacrifice effectiveness or waste a lot of time in fruitless recruiting. Start small, win some battles and the army will grow. Each city is different but it appears that the civil rights groups, student groups especially SDS, and Friends of SNCC, some union people, some church groups, and whomever else you can enlist, are your sources. Get some people working regularly on weekends and evenings. Also form a SPONSORING COMMITTEE OF BIG NAMES IN LABOR, PUBLIC OFFICE, CHURCH, OTHER WELL KNOWN.

There appear to be three general areas of work which your army must push:

1. Aggressive leafleting, publicity and other means of making people aware.
Leafleting—if you do not have your own use ours, but make up yours to fit your situation. Use ours as guideline, be sure FWA is identified clearly with appeal for funds and boycott support.
Leafleting tactic: Transportation depots, church services, colleges, factory gates, shopping centers, large public meetings and entertainment affairs (check papers), wherever large numbers occur. Using two-man teams gives one a chance to talk at length with those who stop while the other keeps hitting passersby.
2. Pledge card situations where you have the chance to buttonhole people.
Places: Union meetings at all levels, get union sponsorship of the pledge card tactic, perhaps a union paper will run it in their paper. Churches—set up tables if allowed or get them to: Student spots, shopping plazas, possibly a door to door effort primarily to get volunteers working. Hit them with the card, either sell for a dime or have them send the cards. Use El Malcriados buttons, anything that you have when you have their attention. At any meeting which even considers the strike use the works. Use displays, we will have prints to you very soon. Check bull horn possibilities. Hit them hard for money when you get them stopped or gathered around. Ask every group to take on a pledge card campaign. Any place where union people pass should be tried hard. Remember to identify the NFWA. Use articles that are appropriate for the group, church papers and statements for churches, college papers, union papers, fit the pitch to the situation.

3. Picketing at stores, homes of opposition, city offices, groups that oppose, union spots, grape depots, public officials, company people (Schenley). But the main object is to stop. The sale of grapes and Schenley's. Here is where you find out what kind of troops you have.

Tactics: Good signs for every picket, be as aggressive as the situation allows but stay non-violent. Devise some means of rapid check on complying stores like a sign in the window. In some cases letting Schenley's stay on shelves with a tag saying we don't sell Schenley's until they negotiate with NFWA in Delano. Know the character of the trade in the area and use the right tactic. Regular pickets are better than lots of occasional ones. This is a consumer boycott. In most places it is best policy to stay on public property, but every picket will require a different tactic. Usually people respect any picket line if they respect picket lines at all.

In addition to these areas you and your key people must constantly work with labor. Ask central councils and locals to cooperate to the hilt and with donations. Put Schenley's and Delano grapes on the "do not patronize list" or "hot cargos" list. Teamsters, retail clerks, bartenders unions. Explain that NFWA is not covered under NLRB, collective bargaining, (do this at all points in your work), if one labor group helps use that with another, use union paper articles of support, we will send out some material for this. Don't give up on labor!

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