

TAPE ARC - 11, TC 3:00:00

ABC NEWS; REEL 203: "CESAR CHAVEZ STORIES"

RALPH COTNER, interviewed by reporter:

3:00:58 REPORTER: Mr. Cotner, do you have any predictions as to how these elections are going to go?

3:01:04 COTNER: I think probably the best prediction I can make at the moment is that there will be considerable confusion the first few weeks. Uh, we, in many important areas, that the Agricultural Labor Relations Board hasn't announced decisions as to their policy on a number of the questions involved. and with the different interests that are involved, the two or three unions that are involved, the employers and so forth, uh, there may be many contested elections initially. It may be difficult to get a clear picture out of these elections. We're hoping that won't be true, but if I were to make a prediction, I would say we'll have a general mess for the first 6-8 weeks.

3:01:56 REPORTER: Once it's sorted out, do you care to make an estimate as to the number of elections you'll win?

3:02:04 COTNER: Well, we, we of course feel pretty confident as to the outcome of the elections, assuming we can get uh, fair elections held and that the Board is adequately staffed to conduct the elections, and we feel that we will win the large majority, a heavy majority of these elections.

3:02:24 REPORTER: People saying FWU is just about defunct, Chavez is washed up, elections his last chance, what's your view?

3:02:49 COTNER: I uh, I personally feel that UFW accepted this state law, they actually have opposed secret ballot elections in the past, the previous efforts to get a state law in this state, or coverage in the National Labor Relations Act, have been opposed by the UFW because they did not want secret ballot elections, and I think that is a fact that they were practically defunct and grabbed at the last chance to breathe some life back into their organization with this state law, and uh, finally possibly, we hope, we'll get a chance to find out just how much worker support they have in the fields.

3:03:31 REPORTER: Cesar Chavez charges, and some other people have raised the charge that the Teamsters and the growers are working hand in hand?

3:03:51 COTNER: Well, we have a long history of doing a pretty credible job for our membership. UFW can charge anything they like, again it will come back, we will be standing on our record. Uh, in these elections the contracts we have in agriculture, I can go through a long list of firsts, that we have established in our agreement, if these elections go as we hope they will, uh, the public generally are going to be able to see who has the support in the fields.... Well, no, certainly the charge is false, our organizers are being kicked out of the fields, run out of the fields, even in the face of our contracts. We've had organizers arrested in the Delano area, uh, employers are uh, charging us with trespassing, we have court orders restraining our uh, signing the people in the field. Uh, again, well, the results show it, the contracts, the stories that we've had from the workers themselves as to their general treatment by UFW. I could go into the old charges that we've levied against UFW, their mistreatment of the hiring halls, their corruption at the hiring halls, the alleged kick-backs, payoffs to get dispatched, all of the things that generally speaking are possibly various unions, problems we've had over many, many years ago that was corrected by federal legislation, is now being practiced in the UFW operation. There's no control on the hiring halls, there's no control on the fines, they're subject to none of the legislation, none of the limitations that other unions have been operating under.

3:06:09 REPORTER: You're saying that the uh Teamsters union is running a very clean operation for the benefit of the farm workers.

3:06:17 COTNER: We are treating farm workers exactly as we treat any other member, uh, of this organization. We are not attempting to run hiring halls, we are not attempting to dictate what farm they can work on. They have a right to pick the place they want to work on, and they have seniority protection under their agreements. And we're trying to negotiate the best wages and conditions under those agreements that we can possibly negotiate.

3:06:41 REPORTER: There has been some uncomplimentary publicity about the Teamsters Union in recent weeks, because of the disappearance of Jimmy Hoffa. Uh, some newspaper articles, magazine articles, are indicating that there is a Mafia element in the Teamsters organization. Has this publicity done any damage to the campaigns here in California?

3:07:01 COTNER: Um, I don't think the average field worker in the fields has much interest in this type of publicity, I think they're primarily concerned with bread and butter items, and that's what our organization is concentrating on, we're going to deal with bread and butter items that the worker is interested in. And I haven't had any field workers asking me lately uh, about this type of publicity. I think there's very little concern. I think the interest is right on their day to day activities, I personally don't think the publicity will have any effect on us at all.

MATURINO, interviewed by reporter:

3:08:20 REPORTER: Mr. Mattorino, how do you think the campaign, if you have one, is going now, in the light of the new election. Are things going well for the Teamsters?

3:08:27 MATURINO: Yes, in this part of the valley where we're at, in Delano, we're getting a good response from the people down here, we signed a majority of the people in the valley, and we're getting a good response to our business agents going out there, and the people are really responding well.

[large section of this tape filled with aerial shots of the fields]

JERRY BROWN, speaking at Farm Worker rally:

3:24:43 BROWN: ...all of us share in common, one mission, one destiny, and out of this tattered social fabric, we're trying to find the common threads to pull us together. The rest of the world is looking to this country...
...is so large and so great, that people all over this country can come to no other conclusion that it's time for a new era of leadership. Not one burdened by the baggage of the last ten years, but one open to the possibilities that are still latent right here in this country. We're going to build America not on guilt, not on, by dividing people, but by giving people an opportunity, an opportunity that millions of people don't have right now. That's an opportunity for a decent job, and to go as far as their talent and their energy and their commitment will allow them. That's all I ask. Give me that chance to go to Washington, and I'll take you there with me in spirit. [APPLAUSE] Thank you very much. Thank you for waiting.

Thank you Cesar Chavez and all the workers and the people of this county. I think we can win, and that we start here and then we go all across the country. Thank you very much.

JERRY BROWN, speaking at campaign rally (in Humboldt?):

(series of incomplete sound bites)

SHOT FROM SIDE HALOED IN LIGHTS:

3:29:36 BROWN: This is the closing uh, days of the campaign, I've been trying to catch up with Carter, he was in California, and then he ran out of town, now he's in New Jersey, so I'll be going to New Jersey on Monday and maybe I'll catch up with him... [Q: Everybody says that Carter is wishy-washy on the issues, where do you stand on Proposition 15?] ...Where do I stand?...