

fall 1977  
montreal

HOUSE MEETING OUTLINE

OPENING

- ① Introduce self and thank host and guests. *⑤ explain breaks*
- Pass list around for people to sign, giving name, address, phone number and organization. *④ why Canada? what we are boycotting*
- Ask people to go around the room and introduce themselves so all can know them. *area group nts 15 Oct 77*

I. PART I: BACKGROUND

- A. WORST EMERGENCY IN HISTORY OF UFW *at crucial point*
  - 1. Grower and Teamster collusion in 1973-74 *greatest opportunity - Dominion Key*
  - 2. Contracts ripped-off *elections possible - no contracts so urgency*
  - 3. Current "rampage" to destroy the UFW *Dominion + Jewel Key*
  - 4. Reversion to "feudal" state of affairs as the last 100 years *Still in emergency*

B. WHY IN THIS SITUATION. GOES BACK 100 YEARS

- 1. Based on formula:
  - Accumulation of tremendous profits by reducing cost to absolute minimum by assuring constant surplus of labour by encouraging influx of immigrants - Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, etc. - resulting in: *story of Japanese - Egg City*
  - Surplus of labor*
  - low cost = big profit*

A. Enormous power of Growers: high farms, corporations, etc. *Tenneco, Dow*

- 1. On the ranch - over workers *no talking*
- 2. In the community, state and nation - due to financial control of politicians *Gallo brothers NIRA*

B. Utter powerlessness of workers - complete inability to improve conditions *migrant - no roots or power base*

- 1. No power on the ranch - if complained, fired. Always more workers than jobs; often meant lost housing and transportation, too.
- 2. No political power - no vote because alien, non-resident, Spanish-speaking
- 3. No way to organize - strikes crushed by
  - a. injunctions of corrupt judges
  - b. billy clubs, bullets, cops, etc. (e.g., Pixley cotton strike)
  - c. Scabs *dis NIRA*

2. Resulting in terrible degradation of workers

- A. Constant abuse by supervisors, foremen, labour contractors *discrimination - women, older people*
- B. "Buying" of jobs - by old and women
- C. Child labour *Michael Hays - 14 - no enforcement of law*
- D. Miserable working conditions
  - 1. Beer can for drinking water *5. speed-ups; firings*
  - 2. Behind the vines toilet *6. safety - Gallo deaths - 3*
  - 3. Pesticide poisoning *Ruben - Jimmy Brooks - 9-7-77 - no enforcement*
  - 4. No breaks
- E. Sub-human living conditions on ranch
  - 1. Bunk-house housing; over-crowded; poor ventilation, *- Solidad deaths*
  - extremely hot in summer; freezing in winter
  - 2. Food - poor quality; ill-prepared; money-maker for contractor *could accidents*
- F. Health
  - 1. Respiratory diseases
  - 2. High mortality
  - 3. Short lives - 49 years

BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS





II. PART II: FOUNDING OF UNITED FARM WORKERS - CESAR CHAVEZ

"Into these terrible conditions came Cesar Chavez"

- A. Brief history of Cesar
  - 1. Farm worker background
  - 2. Experience in C.S.O.
- B. Early struggle to organize workers
  - 1. Around their own problems - death benefit, credit union, service centre, etc.
  - 2. Formed association supported by people - not outside money
  - 3. Many obstacles
    - a. Resistance of workers - fear, house meeting story
    - b. Resistance of friends, family, labour contractors, AWOC
    - c. Hunger, hardship, malnutrition, etc.
  - 4. Organization of the NFWA - Sept., 1962 w/Dolores/Manuel
- C. Grape strike of 1965
  - 1. Filipino strike - NFWA joins *-injunctions - no ballthorns*
  - 2. Struggle for funds
  - 3. Long March to Sacramento
  - 4. Victories
    - a. Schenley - first boycott
    - b. DiGiorgio - 2nd boycott; first secret ballot elections; first confrontation with Teamsters and violence *- no more elections*
    - c. Perelli-Minetti - 3rd boycott; first sweetheart contract by Teamsters, first contract transfer to UFW
- D. Fast vs. Violence - Spring, 1968
- E. International Grape Boycott - 1968-70  
(Montreal - 2 major chains took off grapes)
- F. Victory and Contracts - July, 1970  
Benefits brought to workers: medical, hiring hall, etc.

*1 phoney - intimidation of workers, Gov. Brown inter. 531-330*

BREAK- BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS

III. PART III: GROWERS FIGHT BACK - 1970 - 1973

- A. Teamster/Grower Sweetheart Contracts in the Lettuce
  - 1. Manuel Chavez organizing for two years/sent telegrams
  - 2. Lettuce Strike
    - a. Bishops Committee arbitrates
    - b. Injunctions, arrests
    - c. Teamster violence: Jerry Cohen, etc.
    - d. Inter-Harvest victory
  - 3. Strike injunction and Lettuce boycott: Cesar jailed for 21 days
- B. Grower attempts to destroy Union
  - 1. \$2 Million PR campaign against Boycott 1968-70
  - 2. Sabotage of contracts on ranches
  - 3. Legislation - 1970, 71, 72: 20 states
  - 4. Referendum - Proposition 22 *beat with BB; door to door*
- C. California Supreme Court Decision - Dec., 1972  
Collusion of Grower/Teamsters
- D. Expansion of UFW - 1972 - Florida, etc.
- E. Grower/Teamster Collusion and rip-off of Grape Contracts

*asking for elections  
How could this happen - no law  
why did each get involved -  
growers - escape boycott  
Teamsters - dues, power, pay off  
\$10,000 bribe*

*5. Trick - lettered moratorium - 1971  
9 months -  
bullet in board*

BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-BREAK-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS-QUESTIONS



IV. PART IV: BLOODY SUMMER AND APPEAL FOR HELP

A. Bloody Summer of '73

- 1. Strike in Coachella, etc.
- 2. Injunctions, arrests - *Barbara*
- 3. Goons, beatings *Teamsters - John Banks nose*
- 4. Police, beatings *Then*
- 5. Nagi Daifullah and Juan de la Cruz - Aug. 14 & 16, 1973
- 6. 600 strikers go on Boycott - August 31, 1973

B. Appeal for HELP. Only way we can change all this is to get contracts back - etc. - is with help of thousands of people like yourselves

1. House Meeting Appeal

With your help the farm workers won the Grape Boycott of 1970. With your continued help and thousands of others - people who you invite to your home for us to come and talk to - it can be done again. In this way we can put the real pressure that's needed on the growers/Teamsters.

This isn't the only group that's meeting this way tonight here in Montreal. There's about 15 or 20 other meetings just like this going on here in the city - that's about 80 people - just tonight.

So we can reach the thousands of people we need to and each one of you can help us do it by inviting a few friends over to your house this week or next so we can come and talk to them, just like Mr. Jones did right here.

Mr. X, when can you invite a few friends over so I can come and talk to them?

CONTINUE AROUND THE ROOM LINING UP DEFINITE HOUSE MEETINGS.

2. Action Program Appeal

Probably lots of you have seen us at the Dominion Stores handing out leaflets and asking people not to buy the grapes. Dominion is the largest chain store in Canada and buys the most grapes and when we convince them to stop selling them, that will be a real blow against the growers. One way in which we're getting the word out about the Boycott and also letting Dominion Stores know that there are thousands of shoppers that want them to support the farm workers is in the form of these petitions (pass out petitions - or hold one up). When we leaflet, we are also asking the shoppers to sign these petitions so we can show Dominion the shoppers support us.

But to do these things we need to have a lot more people helping us out there talking to the shoppers.

Actually, it's fun. Many people thank you for reminding them not to buy the grapes; and its a real good feeling - a real accomplishment - to have convinced someone else not to buy the grapes.

Mrs. X, when can you come out to help us? On Friday? Saturday? You won't be alone out there, etc.

CONTINUE AROUND THE ROOM SIGNING PEOPLE UP



3. Money Appeal

Another way in which we need your help is that we depend on people like you to help us and the strikers in California have enough food to eat and enough gas for the car.

Almost every cent you contribute to the UFW goes right to the farm workers. There aren't any fat salaries in our Union and everyone from Cesar right on down gets \$5.00/week and room and board.

The best way to help financially is to make a regular monthly pledge. In this way we know how much is coming in and we can budget things on that basis. We ask you to pledge at least \$5.00/month - the amount we get per week - but any donation will help: from 5 cents to \$5 million.

I want to ask each of you to sign one of these pledge cards I'm passing around and return it to me tonight.

But the best way to start is by making your first month's contribution right here tonight.

4. Window Sign Appeal

A good way to show and advertize your support for the Boycott is by having a window sign in your living room window or any place where it's visible to the general public.- (hold a window sign up). This is a good way to remind people of the Boycott - not to buy or eat grapes and furthermore it makes the chain stores notice who's side the people are on.

Please take one with you before you leave tonight. We are asking only 25 cents for them.

5. Full-Timer Appeal

One last thing - and there's probably no one in the room who can help in this way, but I'll mention it anyway. We need full-time organizers to do the work like I'm doing. Right now there are only 11 of us for the 2 1/2 million people who live in Montreal. If we had 12 more, we could be meeting with 100 people tonight, instead of 50. The salary is only \$5.00/week and room and board - but lots of satisfactions, etc.

C. Close of Meeting

1. One last thing - within the next 6 to 8 weeks, we'll be calling together everybody we've met within this community to set up a community-wide Farm Worker Support Organization, if people here want to. We'll let you know more details.
2. And remember, while we're here tonight, there's probably 10,000 people all over North America doing the same thing - in L.A., New York, etc. TOGETHER WE WILL WIN.

¡VIVA LA CAUSA!

STOMP THE GRAPES!