

Gallo's Letter to the Clergy

† WE HOPE that the 45,000 clergymen who recently received a letter from the makers of Gallo wine were not taken in by the letterwriter's tone of injured innocence, the specious arguments and the rearrangement of facts regarding the company's dispute with the United Farm Workers. In an October 7 letter that began with the greeting, "Dear Reverend," Ernest Gallo pleaded for understanding and sympathy for the "unfair" treatment he and his brother, Julio, are receiving from the UFW; supportive brochures were enclosed.

Poor Ernest! He cannot understand how Cesar Chavez can be so cruel as to conduct a boycott of Gallo products and strike Gallo fields just because the wine company signed a contract last year with the Teamsters instead of UFW, which had represented Gallo workers for the previous six years. After all, writes Ernest, Gallo switched unions only because its farm workers demanded, through a ballot election, that they be represented by the Teamsters.

What he didn't report is that the company, which produces 37 per cent of this country's domestic wines, refused to conduct a secret-ballot election and that 135 of its 185 farm workers went out on strike in protest. It appears that the Gallo brothers decided that it was in their economic interest to relate to the Teamsters rather than the UFW. There is a streak of insincerity in their attempt to persuade the clergy that the company has been innocently caught in a crossfire between two warring unions. A closer look clearly reveals that Gallo not only refused to permit secret elections, but also refused to allow a third-party verification of what was purportedly a card-check election.

Ernest Gallo insists that "we would today have a contract with the United Farm Workers Union if they had not paralyzed negotiations by their implacable stand on union discipline and hiring hall practices which are outlawed by the National Labor Relations Act." What he does not acknowledge is that farm workers are not covered by the NLRA and that his company agreed to the hiring hall and union discipline clauses in 1967 and 1970. Why the sudden change?

He is most insincere, however, when he blithely calls for clergy support of federal legislation that would grant farm workers the right to vote in secret for the union of their choice. The truth of the matter is that both Gallo and the Teamsters have consistently opposed California legislation designed to secure those same rights.

It is interesting to notice the similarity between the troubles Farah Manufacturing Company had for a number of years with labor and Gallo Winery's present dispute with the UFW. Both companies

employed fairly poor workers of Mexican-American extraction. Both opposed grass-roots unionism, and both appealed to predominantly Protestant clergy for support. Since Mexican-Americans are predominantly Catholic, Catholic clergy largely supported the workers in both disputes. And both managements then cynically concluded that Protestant ministers would support their side. The clergy did not fall for the Farah management's appeal, and we hope they will see through Gallo, too.

CORNISH R. ROGERS.

Flawed Vladivostok

† AS THE SENATE buckles down to study the Vladivostok arms agreement before approving, modifying or rejecting it, U.S. and Soviet citizens might well contemplate what the Ford-Brezhnev agreement actually produced. The agreement sets a ceiling of 2,400 nuclear launch vehicles of all kinds on each side. Within this ceiling, each side would be permitted to place multiple warheads (MIRVs) on 1,320 vehicles. Existing silos could be enlarged no more than 15 per cent. The parties to the accord could replace existing missiles with larger missiles. The pact does not cover Soviet or U.S. bombers now being developed. The agreement, which covers a multitude of other nuclear weaponry, would last until 1985, with possible reductions in the agreed levels to begin no later than 1980-81.

A variety of troubling questions arise. Senator Stuart Symington has estimated that the American nuclear arsenal already possesses the equivalent of more than 615,000 Hiroshima bombs. This agreement will permit the American arsenal to expand, as it will permit the Soviet arsenal of MIRVs to expand. What about the enormous costs of constructing these bombs, warheads, bombers and submarines? Surely the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have far more pressing needs. Sanford Gottlieb, executive director of SANE, who has studied the available data on the agreement, wonders why neither side proposed parity at lower levels. He suggests that significant cuts would have meant a major battle with the military-industrial interests on both sides; neither Ford nor Brezhnev is ready for a fight with the generals and their industrial allies. "That is why," says Mr. Gottlieb, "despite urgent economic reasons for reversing the arms race, no weapons are being scrapped."

Which leads to the speculation that a belief in overkill capability is its own ideology and is not confined to either capitalism or communism. Under-scoring this is a recent news item from Hong Kong that reports that the People's Republic of China is having its own internal struggles over how much to spend on defense. China's equivalent of a military

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