40 besiege
ALRB after
losing vote

By JOHN NUNES
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Forty United Farm Workers took over
the besieged Agricultural Labor
Relations board office in El Centro for
the second straight night Thursday,
minutes after losing a secret ballot elec­
tion for employees of Royal Packing Co.

The grower firm's employees group,
Agrupacion Independiente de Traba­
jadores en Royal Packing Co., won the
election by capturing 108 votes. UFW
only received 62 votes. The Independent
Union of Agricultural Workers, a
Teamsters offshoot, got two votes and 14
laborers cast ballots for "no union."

Jeering, shouting UFW supporters
caravanned to the state office from the
Imperial Irrigation District auditorium
in El Centro, where the ballots were
counted by ALRB agents.

Two California State Police, in
plainclothes, stationed themselves in­
side the auditorium during the two-hour
election tally. Other State Police patroll­
et Broadway outside the building.

Tension mounted during the ballot
count, witnessed by 135 persons, as it
became apparent UFW was going to lose
the election. The voices of ALRB of­
icials conducting the proceeding were
drowned out by angry UFW symp­
athizers.

Cesar Chavez' union has conducted a
large-scale protest of the ALRB office
and its employees here since Monday
because the state agency allowed the
Royal employees group to petition for and
take part in the election. The UFW
claims it is company-sponsored.

State Police arrested 28 UFW
demonstrators Tuesday for refusing to
leave the ALRB office. This touched off
demonstrations by the union at ALRB of­
ices throughout the state.

The mass arrest was reportedly the
first police action taken by the Brown
Administration.

On Wednesday, Chavez and company
"invited arrest," commandeering
several state farm labor offices in the
state.

In fact, the ALRB obtained a court
order late Tuesday night from Superior
Court Judge George R. Kirk to limit the
UFW to 10 persons at a time inside the
El Centro office.

But Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr., or
someone high in his administration,
issued a "hands off" order to State
Police.

State and local law officers were in­
structed to let the UFW demonstrators
inside the office Wednesday no matter if
more than 10 at a time came in.

The same thing happened Thursday
night. State Police were attempting to
keep demonstrators in the entrance area
when orders were given to allow the
UFW personnel access to any part of the
office.

The special police then were ordered
to leave. This happened within minutes
after the UFW caravan arrived about 9
p.m.

The demonstrators proceeded to make
themselves at home. Some began mak­
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SECOND STRAIGHT NIGHT

UFW besieges ALRB again after losing Royal election

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fatigued this morning. The office has been under union siege daily since Monday. State Police, scheduled to leave Thursday night, were still standing guard this morning.

"We will leave when the problem is resolved," stated State Police Inspector Robert McHale.

His state troopers worked nine hours overtime Thursday, got four hours sleep and were back on the job at 6 a.m. today.

Lopez said ballots that were run off Thursday night for another election set for today in Winterhaven — Senini, an Arizona-based farm company — had to be rerun because Ganz and other demonstrators saw the color of the ballots.

Lopez explained seeing ballots before the election violates a secrecy rule set by the ALRB.

The Royal Packing ballots, after the tally, were not locked in the office safe. Instead, the documents had to be taken to another office because of the UFW occupation, according to Lopez.

When asked if the UFW will be billed for making long distance phone calls, Lopez replied, "That's up to Sacramento.

Meanwhile, Don Hart, vice president of Royal Packing, was interviewed at the IID auditorium just before the election tally.

The grower executive denied UFW charges that the employees group that formed its own union was in reality a company-backed organization.

"We know nothing about these people" who formed their own union, Hart claimed. "We don't even know how it got started."

The demonstration has not slowed work in Royal's fields, according to Hart. The company is harvesting lettuce in Yuma and the Imperial Valley.

"We'll support whoever wins the election," Hart remarked.

The farm company, head-