Meany attacks Teamsters

AFL-CIO LAUNCHES MAJOR DRIVE TO BOYCOTT GRAPES AND LETTUCE

Huelga in Coachella

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Election fraud at Larson,

Alliance with trucker group, Page 2

Border Patrol negligence exposed, Page 13

Almaden contract renewed

Page 16

This Almaden crew drove the Teamsters out of the fields.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President George Meany of the AFL-CIO announced April 8 that the 12.5 million member labor organization endorses the UFW lettuce and grape boycotts. Meany and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland made the announcement in a letter presented to UFW president Cesar Chavez at a meeting here.

The endorsement continues a long tradition of support for the UFW from the AFL-CIO and many other trade unions and labor organizations, and opens the door to massive boycott support from unions throughout the country.

"The entire AFL-CIO continues to fully support the UFW in its struggle against the unconscionable raid by the Teamsters and the growers," Meany and Kirkland wrote.

"We had hoped to resolve this dispute through the discussions and negotiations which were held," the letter continued, "However the Teamsters negated on their agreement with us and the Teamsters and the growers are jointly seeking to destroy the Farm Workers.

"After consultation with the Committee established by the Executive Council to support the Farm Workers as pursuant to the power granted to us by the AFL (continued on page 2)"
UAW gives $100,000 to UFW strike fund

TORONTO, Ontario - An inter-church committee of Canadian clergy has issued a statement urging Canadians to boycott non-UFW grapes and lettuce until such time as farm workers are granted free secret ballot union elections.

During a ten day tour of farm worker areas in California during February, the group met with Cesar Chavez and Teamster officials, visited grape growers in Coachella, and were present in Calexico during the massive one-day general strike against Teamster contracts.

"The struggle of the American farm workers for social justice and their human right to self determination should be of serious concern to the Canadian churches," the delegation concluded.

"The UFW is in a better position than any other organization to end the traditional abuses of farm labor. It represents a grass roots movement that gives thousands of powerless people an opportunity to improve their lives through collective action," the statement said.

"We agree with the position of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Council of Churches in the U.S., that the UFW boycott of grapes and head lettuce be supported until such time as growers, government, and unions cooperate in giving field workers free secret ballot elections."

Signing the statement were Rev. Francis Cook of the Toronto Conference of the United Church of Canada, Rev. Robert Cuyler of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, Sister Caroline Dawson, a dean of women at the University of Toronto, Rev. Robert Gauld, S.J., of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, Rev. Robert Lindsay of the United Church of Canada, Rev. Robert Madden of Saint Basil's College, and Rev. Brad Massman, Director of the office of Social Action of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

AFL-CIO Launches (continued from page 1)

CIO Executive Council, we are fully endorsing, effective today, the product boycott of lettuce and table grapes. He said the AFL-CIO would also provide written materials and cartoons for union newspapers.

The AFL-CIO endorsement does not include the boycott of Gallo wines, but Chavez said the UFW would continue this boycott on its own and would continue its efforts to obtain an endorsement.

The Gallo boycott endorsement has been held up, he said, because of objections by the AFL-CIO-affiliated Glass Bottle Makers and the Wine Distillers Workers Union, both of whom currently hold contracts with Gallo.

**Farah boycott**

A similar AFL-CIO-supported product boycott of Farah pants on behalf of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) almost dwindled with the multi-million dollar Farah pants company. In 1973 alone, the boycott caused a $14 million drop in the company's profits, forcing it to close down several of its plants.

During that boycott workers and officials from AFL-CIO unions joined the picket lines and spoke out in favor of the boycott. The company signed a contract with the ACWA in March 1974.

AFL-CIO support for the UFW began in September of 1965 with the Great Delano Grape strike called first by the Federation's Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC).

On August 22, 1966, the two unions merged to become the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO. During the first grape boycott, which lasted from 1967 to 1970, assistance from many AFL-CIO unions helped inflict a loss on the growers, forcing them to sign union contracts.

On February 25, 1972, the AFL-CIO granted an official union charter to the then United Farm workers National Union. The granting of the charter was followed on May 5, 1973 by a $1.6 million AFL-CIO grant to the UFW to conduct strikes against grower-Teamster contracts.

The $100,000 UAW contribution, along with other donations of food and money, may make it possible to keep UFW strikes going. Here, UFW strike organizer Manuel Chavez meets with picket crew in Coachella City Park to discuss strike strategy. For more details see page 7.

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TUCSON, Arizona - Truckers for Justice, the nationwide organization of independent truck drivers, says its members will refuse to haul scab grapes or lettuce.

In a joint statement here with Cesar Chavez April 3, Georgia truck driver A.S. Phifer, chairman of TFW, said his organization and the UFW had reached a "working alliance," because "truckers and farm workers are both victims of the policies of the giant monopolies and a corrupt government, and because both truckers and farm workers are committed to the cause of justice."

Truckers for Justice was formed at a Tucson truck stop during the nationwide shutdown by independent truck drivers December 13-14 of 1972. In a statement issued at that time, the truckers attacked profiteering by the oil corporations as the chief cause of the energy crisis.

The group now has over 500 members, all long haul truck drivers.

Chavez said the UFW supports the truckers' demands for a rollback of fuel prices to the level of May 15, 1973, a complete public audit of the major oil companies' records, the elimination of the 55 mph speed limit, and full review by the government of the problems truckers face.

"The attacks on the UFW by Frank Fitzsimmons are a national disgrace," Phifer said. "His refusal to allow the farm workers to vote for the bargaining agent of their choice should outrage all working people. We do not believe that Fitzsimmons, who has also betrayed the American truckers, reflects the will of Teamster Union members. We know the Teamster members are disgusted with this action by Fitzsimmons, and we urge them to join with us in this policy in the cause of justice."

"Our position," said TFW communications director Rees Lloyd, "is that if Fitzsimmons and Nixon want to eat scab grapes and lettuce, they'll have to eat them in the fields."

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Canadian Clergy supports grape, lettuce boycotts

TORONTO, Ontario - An inter-church committee of Canadian clergy has issued a statement urging Canadians to boycott non-UFW grapes and lettuce until such time as farm workers are granted free secret ballot union elections.

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Los Angeles, California -- The United Auto Workers gave the UFW $100,000 April 1 to support the union's activities this summer. Shown above is UAW Region 6 Director Jerry Whipple presenting the money to the UFW's National Executive Board in a ceremony in Los Angeles.

"We started ourselves in the same position as the farm workers," Whipple said, "and through the help of other unions at that time were able to build our union. Our membership feels we have a responsibility to help the farm workers who have been deprived of collective bargaining and the rights which other workers have."

Region 6 of the UAW has 95,000 active members and 40,000 retired members in nine states.

Whipple also said that delegates to the UAW's International Convention being held in Los Angeles in early June would join farm workers on strike picket lines.

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Page 2 - April 17, 1974 - El Malcriado
What really happened at Larson's
WORKERS BLAST PHONEY ELECTIONS

COACHELLA, Ca. At the same time that it was negotiating a new contract "in good faith" with the United Farm Workers, America, the K.K. Larson Company held a surprise election March 21 by which, according to the company, its workers rejected UFW representation.

Larson himself could not be reached for comment. But why should I vote when we already have a union represented there, he said. That was the way Larson wanted it.

Unfair practices charged

In the days following the announcement of the election, local Teamster officials and growers were quick to assert that the results marked a major defeat for the UFW. Meanwhile, the UFW charged that the election was "so riddled with unfair labor practices that it "should be considered a legitimate test of the desires of the Larson workers" and prepared to take the matter to the California labor laws for interfering with the rights of the workers to organize. "All the procedures that we were entitled to were violated," charged UFW attorney Sandy Aviles, "It wasn't an election; it was an absurdity, the most obvious form of employer interference with a labor union's right to organize."

Among the unfair practices which Nathan said would have outlived this election under normal election procedures were:

• No UFW representative was present to observe the election. The UFW did not receive a copy of the election even though its name appeared on the ballot. The election was held while the UFW still held a valid arbitration award. 

• No procedures were agreed upon by opposing parties and the neutral arbitrator.

• The postcard election was conducted at the request of the workers by Father Richard Humphries, a local priest. He said, 60 workers voted not to renew the existing UFW contract, 28 voted in favor of renewing the contract, and seven refused to vote. "It was like being on trial with a prosecuting attorney but no defense lawyer," said one of the workers who refused to participate in the vote. "I was there with the company ramifications. Everyone had to come and vote, but why should I vote when we still have a contract?"

The Larson workers have been covered by a UFW contract since 1970. The contract expired April 15.

Long-time Larson worker Alfredo Lopez added, "The company has riled up our workers so he wouldn't be able to get a job later. I'm sure of that."

Lopez also refused to participate in the election and prepared to sign a union representation card representing the workers, but his signatures were riled up in favor of voting. "It was just the patron with his promises and each worker all by himself. That's the way Larson wanted it."

Recent developments

Larson becomes a Teamster organizer

COACHELLA, Ca. While the David Freedman, Inc. signed a new long contract with UFW on April 15, Mrs. R. K. Larson announced to the press, that she would begin negotiations with the Teamsters on April 17, to test the Teamsters election. The morning of the 15th the Larsons refused the card check plan adopted in the Teamsters election, as a basis of the Teamster petition, validated by a "hand writing examination."

Once Larson cancelled the new election, he announced a card-check-off election for April 17. To test the Teamsters, 200 of the 200 workers signed and submitted a petition requesting Teamster representation.

Once Larson cancelled the new election, he announced a card-check-off election for April 19, to test the Teamsters. The morning of the 15th the Larsons refused the card check plan adopted in the Teamsters election, as a basis of the Teamster petition, validated by a "hand writing examination."

The petition check came less than a week after UFW stewards Jose David Perez Sr. and Alfredo Lopez were fired from their jobs at Larson. Other workers reported that the week prior to the card check was marked by an intensified campaign of harassment aimed at eliminating UFW from the ranch and coercing the remainder into signing with Teamster petitions. Though Larson publicly accepted UFW strike organizer Manuel Chavez' April 10 challenge to a new election, any hope for such election disappeared when Chavez went out to the ranch on April 12 to discuss ground rules with Larson. "Let's make one thing perfectly clear," Larson told him. "I'm the employer here and I make all the ground rules."

Dispute

Workers at the ranch report that as many as 10 workers have been used to force people to sign Teamster petitions, which were circulated by company supervisor Josephina Garcia. According to a sworn statement by Teamster阳县, Edison Aviles, and Raphael Perez. "In the past few days Larson has been trying to get all the people at this ranch to sign up with the Teamsters at his ranch."

Many not signed because they do not want the Teamsters and Larson has just in these last few days tried to frighten these people into signing. He said that if we do not sign the petition for the Teamsters and if we go on strike and refuse to work under a Teamster contract, he will make sure that the immigration comes and takes away our green cards and the green cards of our families. (Green cards are special permits granted to Mexican citizens permitting them to live permanently in the United States.) He said that everybody who refuses to go along with his wishes to have the Teamsters will be sent back to Mexico," the statement continued. "He said he had talked with his attorney and hyperbole that said that this was right."

Larson himself could not be reached for comment on these charges, but Mrs. Larson denied every one of them. "I don't have any power of our own." she said of the Teamsters. (continued on page 4)

"If we got a petition from our workers, a Petition confirmed to the Larsen workers and confronted Mrs. Larson with what she had been told about the Larsons soliciting letters from the workers. Mrs. Larson denied it, but Chavez also told Rev. Lloyd Saatlian, the permanent arbitrator, what he had heard. "I don't think so," Saatlian told Chavez. "They have told me about it." "I give them the benefit of the doubt," Chavez replied, but you want to know that if she's here in negotiations and they're over there trying to throw the union out, then she's negotiating in bad faith."

As Larson tells it, the story was broadcast over the local Spanish radio station, prompting eight workers to come and ask that the company not sign with Chavez. Later that day, he said he was given a petition signed by 67 workers asking Larson "not to sign with any union." However, the workers report that the petition was actually circulated by a Larson forewoman named Gloria, who urged them to sign it.

"Gloria was telling the people that if there was no union the people would be free to work more than eight hours, that they could work on Sunday, and make as much money as they wanted," according to the affidavit of the twenty Larson workers.

Bad faith

That day Cesar Chavezarived in Coachella to negotiate with the Larsons and confronted Mrs. Larson with what he had been told about the Larsons soliciting letters from the workers. Mrs. Larson denied it, but Chavez also told Rev. Lloyd Saatlian, the permanent arbitrator, what he had heard. "I don't think so," Saatlian told Chavez. "They have told me about it." "I give them the benefit of the doubt," Chavez replied, "but I want you to know that if she's here in negotiations and they're over there trying to throw the union out, then she's negotiating in bad faith."

Finally, Chavez confirmed to El Malcriado that he had not been informed of the elections but said (continued on page 4)
In 1969-70 K. K. Larson toured the nation attacking the UFWOC and declaring that his workers were happy and did not need or want a union. His tour was sponsored by the Desert Grape Growers' League of California.

" Everywhere he went the workers wouldn't give his workers the vote to decide the question," recalls Cesar Chavez. "Every time he attacked us I would come back and say that if we did represent the farm workers, then let the workers decide. Finally we trapped him that way. It was like the fish that opened up his mouth too much and finally swallowed the hook." 

At the National Council of Churches General Assembly in December of 1969 Larson asked for elections and a representative of the UFWOC accepted the long-awaited offer on the spot. In order for there to be fair elections two impartial and respected men were chosen by mutual agreement of growers and the UFWOC to supervise the elections: Monsignor Mahoney, then the acting Secretary for the Bishop's Committee on Migratory Labor, and Rev. Lloyd Saatjian, president of the board of trustees. (Rev. Saatjian is now the permanent arbitrator for disputes between the UFW, K.K. Larson and Freedman Co.)

"I first sat down and wrote out all the procedures that I thought were important for a fair election," Rev. Saatjian told EL Malcriado. "Like a secret ballot - a place to vote in privacy, a numbered ballot rather than just a slip of paper with an X on it."

"Then the UFWOC and the Larson workers decided upon a time period for when the elections would take place, and a place for the election. We rented ballots boxes from Riverside County and I ran off the ballots at the Church."

"The agreement we made between the parties concerned said that the grower and the union were to be 100 yards away from the ballot box. This was to ensure there wouldn't be any attempt to influence the vote."

But all was not smooth going in the 1970 elections recalls Cesar Chavez, "The big issue in that election was the supervisor, Josephina Garcia. She was the big stumbling block. She didn't want the Union because she was strictly company. "She gave the jobs, she decided who worked and who didn't."

As a result of Josephina Garcia winning the election the ballots were tallied at the Church. However, there was no final tally until two weeks later when the votes were counted and a winner declared. It was 102-98 in favor of the UFWOC for the Union. After the votes were counted Chavez was told he had won.

In 1970 there were 42 voter registration booths and 144 ballot boxes placed in the fields and homes of the Coachella Valley. The vote was held at the Larson Company Ranch. The vote was divided into two parts. The first was for the hiring hall and the second for collective bargaining. In the first of the two elections the Larson workers voted for the hiring hall. In the second election the Larson workers voted for collective bargaining.

The result of the elections was that the workers voted 152-2 to have the UFWOC as their collective bargaining representative.

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UFW bill demands fair election rules

With State AFL-CIO support

The UFW bill demands fair election rules

Fr. Humphrys under fire

Company priest defends growers

SACRAMENTO, Ca. — A secret ballot election bill is being considered in the California State Legislature which will insure that the maximum number of farm workers can participate in elections to choose their union, while still protecting their right to strike at harvest time and to boycott scab products.

The bill (AB3370) was drafted by the United Farm Workers of America in conjunction with the State Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, and sponsored by Richard Alatorre, John Burton, John Foran, and Alex Garcia. Introduced on March 11, it now awaits hearings in the Assembly Labor Relations Committee.

The introduction of this bill follows a long string of grower-sponsored legislation in California, Oregon, and other states, which attempted to ban strikes and boycotts while limiting the number of farm workers who could participate in the elections. All of these bills were defeated, as was Proposition 22 in 1970, the most notorious of all grower-Farm Bureau attempts tocripple the election procedure for farm workers.

Sets secret ballot vote

The proposed legislation would establish a three member Agricultural Workers' Commission, appointed by the governor, with one member representing the workers' interests, one the growers' interests, and one the public interest.

The Commission would hold an election at a ranch if half of the workers presented a petition during the peak harvest season demanding an election to prove they want a particular union to represent them. These unions could get on the ballot by presenting the signatures of ten percent of the workers.

An election by secret ballot would then be held within seven days, with ballots in English, Spanish, and other such languages as Arabic, and Tagalog that the workers speak. Identifying the unions would also appear on the ballots for workers who could not read.

Eligibility for voting is determined by checking the grower's payroll for the period preceding the election. The election must be held during the harvest season when the highest number of workers is present.

The Union that wins the election is then certified by the Commission and the grower is obligated to bargain with it for a contract. A union is also certified if the Commission finds that the workers at a ranch go on strike demanding representation by the union.

Furthermore, a contract signed by a grower with a union that has not been certified is illegal, and any contract signed under it must be returned to the workers. Any contracts signed before the bill goes into effect are open to an election if the workers desire in order to determine their validity.

Teamsters oppose bill

The Teamsters oppose the bill, saying it would automatically void the grows and contracts to which they signed with growers without the workers' consent. (Actually, it allows the workers to void the Teamsters out if they wish.)

"The beauty of this bill," says Cesar Chavez, "is that it protects the rights of the workers to strike and boycott. It also provides for fair elections where the greatest number of workers can vote.

"It also provides the growers with a simple means of determining who the workers want. The growers can no longer say that they are caught in the middle of a 'jurisdictional dispute' between two unions where they don't know who represents their workers. This bill provides a way for them to find out."

Unfair practices

The bill details specific unfair labor practices on the part of growers and unions which the Commission is responsible for preventing in order to insure a fair election. Unions are guaranteed the right of access to workers in their homes and in the fields and labor camps, but are prohibited from using threats or intimidation to secure votes.

No union can participate in an election if it has been charged by the U.S. Equal Opportunities Commission with discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, or religion. Neither may un­ion accept money or support from the grower.

"When you have the support of the workers, you don't have to cheat," Chavez said.

Growers, on the other hand, are prevented from interfering with the union's rights to contact workers before an election or from supporting or opposing another or inquiring of the workers what their preference is. In addition, they may not offer benefits or threaten reprisals such as loss of jobs to workers who support union one or another.

"Anyone familiar with industrial reality knows that the employer has tremendous control over the workers," Chavez said.

"Experience shows that employer intimidation can take many forms, and so even the National Labor Relations Board has always demanded perfect conditions for elections to insure that the workers are not cheated."

"In agriculture these problems are even more serious for the poor and vulnerable migrant farm workers."

"They have been using the old parish miners which union their work­ers.

"It also provides the workers with a simple means of determining who the growers want. The growers can no longer say that they are caught in the middle of a 'jurisdictional dispute' between two unions where they don't know who represents their workers. This bill provides a way for them to find out."

Fr. Hopkins under fire

Company priest defends growers

"You shouldn't be so hard on the grower, as if he was an evil, vicious man who is getting rich at the workers' expense," said Fr. Humphrys. "If the rancher could pay higher wages, he would have to talk many of the growers out of it.

So said Fr. Humphrys several days after he supervised an election at the request of Coachella grape grower K.K. Larson. Since then, he has become the chief spokesman for Larson.

"Farm workers must consider that farm work isn't skilled, it is a constant and an endless struggle," says Fr. Humphrys. "And if you were to look at the wages of a busboy, or a garage attendant, or a domestic or a clerk, they don't receive $3.00 an hour either."

"We used to have an unlimited labor supply, it was just like we bought the Chinese coolies. Even then it was terrible wages, but it was three or four times what they could have gotten back in their home countries."

At a press conference sponsored by the California Council of Growers and held in his church the day after the election, Humphrys told reporters:

"Everyone says that secret ballot elections should be held and that we should let the workers speak for themselves. Yet, no one does anything about it, I decided to make a beginning." Kicked strikers out

Most Coachella farm workers remember Fr. Humphrys as the priest who are the height of the 1973 strike and kicked them out of their church. The strikers had been using the old parish kitchen to cook meals to take to the picket line and for an occasional meeting.

Not a single mass

Before coming to Coachella in 1973 Fr. Humphrys served a church in Elyte in lettuce producing area, where he says he there they are," he says, "I talk with members of my church and they say they are happy, that farm workers have come out against the Teamsters and it is rather embarrassing."

Under attack

Since the election two high-ranking Catholic laymen have attacked Humphrys activities. "We have testimony from farm workers," they said, "of the illegal­ity of the whole procedure, because of intimidation, improper­ity and fraudulent methods."

Leo Loera, of Riverside, vice chairman of the Synodal Mexican-American Commission on the San Diego Catholic Diocese and Sister Sara Murieta of San Diego charged in a letter to the Bishop of San Diego that Father Humphrys "has mis­represented his brother priests who were working along with him in research and formulating a comprehensive approach to a solu­tion to the problem."

Bishop Maher responded to Fr. Humphrys activities by telling him that the letter contained "false and false­ful public statements on the farm labor controversy." Asked about these and other charges, Humphrys told EL MALCRINO, "It's utterly ridiculous. I have been a com­pany priest, I never put my foot down in that ranch before the election. I have never been commenting on these attacks, but I don't want to go in direct op­position to my bishop."

El Malcriado then asked Humphrys if he ever spoke out against the injustices done to farm workers where the slightest pro­tect or refusal to cooperate can mean instant loss of job or home.

Under the provisions of this bill, workers at a ranch where a contract is held by a union may petition for an election to prove that the union no longer represents them.

These "decertification" elections however, must be held with the same eligibility and protection of rights as the "certification" elections.

"I don't think the Larsen case could have been held under this bill," said Assemblyman Alatorre, "because the bill en­ables a commission that isn't stantion one way or the other to run the elections. That way a biased side is taken."

El Malcriado — April 17, 1974 — Page 5
National officers report to Coachella strikers:

'WE HAVE A DATE WITH JUSTICE'

The members of the National Executive Board of the UFW travelled to Coachella April 1 to meet with striking grape workers on the picket line at the Bagdasarian Ranch. Later in the city park in Coachella, the Board members delivered brief reports on their work on the boycott and elsewhere in the union.

Cesar President:

We're here because we want you to know that we are as concerned as you are about our union, we're here because we want you to share with you our solidarity... We've been in deliberations and discussions with the executive board for three days now, talking about the strikes and the money and the sacrifice and the organizing and all those things that go into making a strike successful.

As we talked this over we flashed back to last year, and two and three and four years ago, and the whole history of the union, all of the great love and sacrifices, all of your feelings and your families and the loss of income and the uncertainty of what may happen tomorrow. All these great sacrifices and courage give us the determination to continue. And we're here today because we want to be near you, to have your spirit touch our union and your families up and the loss of income... We've been here in Coachella because we want to share with you our solidarity.

Then we went out there and we talked to the workers there, a lot more strikers. We've been out there picking in the snow, and we know we have a lot more strength. So while you are going to be together, when I go back I see all the grapes that come to Baltimore will rot.

The union membership and the people that's working on the boycott down in Florida, they have already said that they could raise enough money, they know strikes aren't easy, but they have promised to raise enough money to feed you for at least two or three weeks during the strike, and that's just for one place.

When I go back to Florida, I'm going to be telling the people that they don't have to be concerned about you guys giving up, because you guys can take whatever the growers throw at you.

Pete Velasco, third vice-president, Baltimore boycott director:

I was here in 1969, and we have fought together we won contracts here in 1970. We are here today to let the growers know that we are going to win back the contracts that were stolen away from us. We are going to have to be together.

When I go back to Baltimore I will see to it that I do my damnedest best to see that all the grapes that come to Baltimore will rot.

Mack Lyons, executive board member, Florida UFW director:

I'm not going to forget about it in Florida, and they ain't about to forget about the union in Florida. And there's no way that they are going to forget the people here.

The union membership and the people working on the boycott down in Florida, they have already said that they could raise enough money, they know strikes aren't easy, but they have promised to raise enough money to feed you for at least two or three weeks during the strike, and that's just for one place.

When I go back to Florida, I'm going to be telling the people that they don't have to be concerned about you guys giving up, because you guys can take whatever the growers throw at you.

I don't have to speak Spanish to know that. It's just something that you naturally know from being around people like you that's so dedicated and I'm really happy to be working in Florida on the boycott. We don't have any grapes in Florida and I'm pretty sure that we aren't going to get any.

Eliese Medina, executive board member, Canadian boycott director:

We're very happy to be back here because last year there was a strike here in Coachella and we were there. We fought it and we won.

And if you are willing to strike and you are willing to struggle, the people of Coachella I am sure will back you up all the way and what we have to do is build a pincer movement... on one side the boycott and on the other, the strike!

And then, we just have to make it so tight that the growers are going to know that there has to be one union, not only in the grapes but in the lettuce and the wine, a union of farm workers and not a union of growers like they have now. And if you stick it out, we'll stick it out for as long as it takes.

Richard Chavez, executive board member, New York boycott director:

I want to assure you that we're going to win this strike, and it's going to be won because there's a lot of support all over, not only in the United States but in Canada and Europe, everywhere that I have been.

People from the labor unions, people from the churches, stu-
COACHELLA STRIKERS RENEW FIGHT TO WIN BACK STOLEN CONTRACTS

COACHELLA, Ca. -- Farm workers are back on the picket lines in the Coachella Valley despite threats of violence, grower injunctions, police harassment and a reported $100,000-a-month Teamster organizing campaign bent on eliminating the UFW.

Strike action began March 17 with a mile-and-a-half long car caravan that visited numerous labor camps in Mecca, Thermal and surrounding areas. At the camps huey-style flags appeared from windows, doors and parked cars to greet the strikers.

Picketing began the following day at the Melikian Ranch. About 150 enthusiastic pickets sang and talked to strikebreakers, who slowed down to listen.

"The workers are helping us along," said striker Phillip Romero. "We've seen the bosses fire whole crews for working slow, but they don't dare since we're here.

Later that morning Teamster organizers Johnny "Yellow Gloves" Macias, Robert Hernandez and Lazaro Rodriguez arrived on the scene and harried into the fields to get the strikebreakers' signatures on their Teamster authorization cards, which they did wherever the strikers went.

After an hour of constant pressure from the picket line, the Teamsters gave the slow-moving workers a 23-minute break, while the picket line cheered on.

At one of the ranches, Mike Alvarez, a foreman, responded to the picket line by taking dollar bills from his pockets, kissing them, and holding them above his head as he ran up and down the grape rows yelling "See how much money farmworkers make."

As the strike progressed and the labor shortage got more pressure on the growers many picketers reported a large percentage of the workers were being brought from Mexico illegally.

"There are many illegals here," Javier Campos told EL MALCRIADO. "Right here in Mecca there is not a house that doesn't have two or three and every day more arrive."

Coachella farm workers explain there is a complicated network of labor contractors and "coyotes" who bring Mexican farm workers without papers from the border 100 miles away and smuggle them into dozens of rundown labor camps in the Coachella area. From there they are taken by the contractors to the fields and orchards under Teamster contracts to break the strike.

In the day's that followed the small but constant pressure of the strike began to affect the lives of all farm workers in the Valley.

Field strikers, entire families, made great sacrifices. "This Union doesn't run on money," Field Office Director Carlos Frierson told the strikers one afternoon, "but on the vision of our people. The Teamsters are after money, but we ask for dignity."

And as striker Chayo Pelayo paced the grape rows among the picketers, she grinned widely saying, "Well, get along as long as we have a bit of flour and beans.

The flour and beans and canned goods started to come into Coachella in the days that followed. Food caravans arrived from the Orange County boycott, from the Support Committee at San Jose State and from the In-faith Committee of the Methodist Church in San Diego.

Even more affected by the strike are the farm workers who continued to cross the picket lines. On March 25 a farm worker who had been working under Teamster contract, Tomas Hernandez, came into the UFW field office and told Carlos Frierson, "Weeks ago when the encroaching edge of the field fighting him, and it would have looked bad for me to have gone over to you. But when he saw that you all helped me, I didn't have to worry."

I'm going back to work for you tomorrow, I don't want to see you sit down or even stand still one moment, I want to see you work like you're running, and if you don't, you won't work."

In late March many strikers were telling the unions, "We may be few picketers here, but there are thousands of brothers and sisters on our boycott across the entire nation."

On April 1, the nine members of the UFW National Executive Board, most from boycott assignments throughout the U.S. and Canada, joined the picket line.

Accompanied by 40 Union staff from La Paz, the UFW officers helped picket at the Bagdasarian Ranch.

At the rally that followed in the Coachella Park, UFW President Cesar Chavez declared his "solidarity with the Coachella workers" and vowed that the UFW will "strike and boycott" the Coachella Valley table grape growers of California "until we get all our contracts back."

Cheers welcomed Chavez report of the new UFW contract with Almaden.

He also announced the Unions efforts to raise funds so that strike benefits would be available in the near future.

During the meeting Coachella City Police cited the rally as illegal and issued Carlos Frierson a $50 fine for meeting without a permit, the second citation given him since the strike began.

Cesar Chavez criticized Coachella Police Chief Charles Christiansen and called the citation, "one more kind of harassment we have to put up with."

He said if necessary, all the non-violent farm workers would go to jail. There were no arrests.

After weeks of constant picket line activity strikebreakers began to respond and leave the vineyards.

On April 3 Oscar Vega and David Gonzales left the Carian Ranch that was being picketed and joined the Huelegs.

"You were Probings us," Oscar Vega explained to the strikers, "We were getting paid 20 cents a vine for taking off the leaves, but the Teamster contract says 40 cents. So we all made a "Mini-paico" (mini-work stop page) with the rest of the workers to ask for the 40 cents."

"Then Carian, the machine," came and said, "No! I'm paying only 5 cents more. If you don't like it, get the hell out!"

So when we saw the flags we decided to join, because there is no protection with the Teamsters. All they told us was to sign or there would be no work for us.

On April 4 four more strikebreakers joined the strike at the Valadora Company. One of them, Francisco Garcia, had had over $100 deducted against his will from his weekly pay check; $23 for Teamster dues and "insurance." (See graph below.)

When they made me sign the card they told me it was to get more money, he said, "Then the Teamsters took $23 from me, but I never gave them authorization."

He said that in the Valadora Crops where he stayed for $19 a week there was a leesy gas store in his room and mattresses that were not fit to sleep on. Also, he said the company sometimes sent its workers to work without treatment.

Striker Jesus Garcia (left) greets three farm workers after they walked out of a Valadora Produce Co. field April 3 and joined the strike.
Strike will lower grape quality

COACHELLA, Ca. — As the thinning season began in the grapes here in mid-March, grape growers with Teamster contracts are facing a shortage of workers and a boycott that one of them describes as "more effective than ever before."

UFW members who live in the Indio Labor Camp, largest in the Coachella Valley, say there are many new faces in the camp this year. Most of the veteran grape workers have not returned, they report.

"While the flags are out they won't come back," one said, because even though they are too poor to join us, they will not break the strike.

The labor shortage will get worse as the season progresses, said Gil Kostoll, statistician for the Human Resources Development Agency in Indio. As the thinning in the grapes began, he said, the labor force was already down 100, and in another month there will be a shortage of "about 4,500 workers."

Kostoll said he thinks that the memory of last year's violence is the main cause of the shortage. I think they're afraid of getting hurt. That's human nature," he said.

Anticipating a shortage of workers, the growers reportedly sent recruiters to Texas and Mexico beginning in January to find people to come to work. And it is widely reported in Coachella and Calexico that a new work has been established to bring workers across the Mexican border illegally to work in the grapes.

The lack of experienced workers is expected to have an immediate effect on the quality of the grapes. Preharvest work called thinning is now taking place, where 90% of the grape growth is removed from the vines so that the remaining bunches grow large and full. If the thinning is done poorly, the bunches that will grow will be crowded, causing bunch rot, which ruins the quality of the grapes.

The following letter was mailed to UFW members who live in the Indio Labor Camp:

"We know that you talk a lot against the Tintos (Teamsters) and that you say that only Chavez will win. Well, you cut it out if you don't want something to happen to your daughter when she is leaving school or wherever she is. So watch out.

First warning

"Tell them to steal her from me," the distraught father told El Malcrilo, "that's the only child I have."

After he received the threat March 19, he went to the UFW office in Coachella and was accompanied to the Indio Police Dept. where he filed a complaint.

Detective Carl Kennedy said, "I hope that there will be no more incidents like this one this year, but I won't be surprised if there are."

On March 17 the night before the workers went to their homes, fire bombers burned down a barracks at a labor camp belonging to grower Harry Carlin. Nine men were arrested, the building at the time, but none were hurt. Teamster officials, including William Grami Jr., were on the scene and later made statements to the press implicating the United Farm Workers for the violence.

The following day Grami told reporters, "You know, I get workers' statements that they believe in the United Farm Workers."

But one of the nine, Luis Martinez, indicated that they made no such statements.

"We can't blame anyone because we saw neither the car nor anyone," he said. "What the Teamsters ought to investigate is why we have no electricity here at the camp."

While poor, skilled families received similar threats by mail later in the week, labor contractors and foremen circulated arm guards. Fire bombings were common in the labor camps urging them to take up arms against the "Chavistas."

"They are trying to break the strikers' arms," reported UFW member Luis Gonzalez, who lives in the Indio Labor Camp. "A contractor named Mariano Gonzalez and a foreman named Juan Fernandez were arrested from the state of Colima by the police."

The following dayGrami told reporters, "You know, I get workers' statements that they believe in the United Farm Workers."

Table grapes, however, bring roughly $7000 a ton, while raisins make only $750 a ton, also, as one worker in Coachella remarked, "Even raisin grapes have to be thinned and picked."

Growers, Teamsters start scare campaign

COACHELLA Ca. — Teamster organizers and foremen are busy in Coachella Valley creating an atmosphere of fear and terror by means of rumors, lies and threats charge Coachella farm workers. The following letter was mailed to a farm worker who resides in the Indio Labor Camp:

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Kern County D.A. organizes statewide court conspiracy

BAKERSFIELD, Ca. - Law enforcement officials from agricultural counties of California held a series of meetings in late March aimed at a "standardizing" anti-picketing injunctions and arrest procedures against UFW strikers this summer.

The effect of the procedures worked out in these recent meetings will be to transfer from the growers to the district attorneys of each county the responsibility for prosecuting farm workers for civil contempt of court for violating injunctions.

There is no jury trial in civil contempt cases. Ten strikers have already been arrested in a Coachella under these procedures.

The UFW General Counsel Jerry Cohen said the procedures make the D.A. into the private attorney for the growers.

The four meetings held during the past two months were organized by Albert Leddy, District Attorney for Kern County, the man who supervised the arrest of hundreds of UFW strikers last summer and refused to prosecute sheriffs who attacked picketers.

Leddy said the meetings were designed to eliminate the mass arrests of last year and make the situation easier for everyone.

Cesar Chavez, however, labelled Leddy's efforts as an "open conspiracy to pervert justice" aimed at "strengthening the legal shackles he is fore-going against farm workers.

There is a lot of talk about people going around armed with chains, clubs, and other weapons. But there is no cavalry of justice being formed to prevent violence, outlawry and the threat of life and limb." Chavez challenged the D.A. to "come out from behind the mean and try to jolt the victims and protect the oppressors, Chavez charged.

The last of the four meetings took place in Bakersfield on March 22. There were 40 growers, deputies, sheriffs, and sheriffs' officers from as observers, angrily denounced the meeting as illegal and refused to participate in what they considered the entire concept of standardized injunctions as an unconstitutional attack on free speech and assembly.

"Any court order affecting the First Amendment rights must be tailored to meet a specific situation," Cohn told the group, "and so you cannot possibly write an injunction that can fit every situation all over California."


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Anti-strike court plan fails first test

COACHELLA, Ca. -- The speedy-arrest plan organized by Kern County District Attorney Albert Leddy failed its first test as a criminal and civil charges against ten UFW pickets were dropped.

The pickets were arrested March 26 by the Bagdassarian Ranch and charged with "civil violation of a court injunction" and held for 7 1/2 hours by the Riverside County Sheriff's Department in Indio, until they were released without bail.

UFW attorney Sammy Norman was furious when he arrived at the jail after the arrests. He told officer Fremding of the Sheriff's Dept. "This civil violation is just another way of running us around, making us wait to get people out. We're not going to have anything to do with these games you play," Fremding did not reply.

Meanwhile, 150 strikers picketed outside the jail in protest to the illegal arrests. Each time that the front doors of the Sheriff's Dept., were opened shouts of "VIVA LA HUELGA!" swept through the building noticeably upsetting the inmates inside.

On the day of the arrests 80 strikers were picketing on both sides of the road between the Bagdassarian and Melkian ranches, as is permitted by the injunction. If work is being done on both sides of the road, Melkian supervisor Heribert rushed to the spot and asked sheriff's deputies, "Can you get these guys out here?"

Then Nick Bozick, general manager of Bagdassarian, arrived on the scene. He saw the strikers talking to the Border Patrol at the field and the sheriff away. Several strikers saw the sheriff go around to the back of the vineyard and hide, but Bozick rushed to the deputies and told them to start the arrests, saying his field was empty, and thus the picketers were violating the injunction.

Arrested were Carlos Piresco (Field Office Director), Esteban Hernandez, Victor Gonzalez (from the Orange County Boycott), Jose Melgordo Sanchez, Marcelino Andres, Santiago Carpena, Lino Carpena, Lope Cabezas, Laura Tovar, Celsiberto Reyes and his mother, Dominga Reyes.

Meetings

The meetings among law enforcement officials began last January in Palm Springs, near Coachella, where high-ranking sheriffs' officers met to discuss last year's strikes.

On February 6, Leddy wrote a letter to the presiding judges of all the major agricultural counties asking them to submit all the injunctions they issued last summer so that a standard injunction could be "written as a means of prevention."

A second meeting was held in Fresno several weeks later of police officers in charge of field operations, where the standard arrest affidavit was worked out.

The final two meetings in Bakersfield March 18 and 21 included law enforcement personnel on all levels.

Meanwhile, Imperial County Sheriff Oren Fox has reported to the county's Board of Supervisors that his office is establishing a "regional enforcement team" with four other southern California counties to send men and equipment to strike areas "in order to alleviate the strain on any one county's sheriff's department."

Kern, Riverside, San Luis Obispo, Tulare, and Fresno counties along with Teamster and grower lawyers, gathered at the Hill House to discuss a standard injunction and arrest form that had been worked out at the previous meetings.

Outside, a picket line of more than 100 farm workers chanted "GUARDIANS OF CALIFORNIA" and "BOYCOTT CALIFORNIA" - "We want our contracts back," the legal staff members, who attended the meeting.

During last year's strikes, growers retained over 60 injunctions against striking farm workers who led to the arrest of nearly 400 strikers who didn't have anything to do with these games you play," Fremding did not reply.

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A heated argument between grape growers in the Arvin-Lamont area highlighted the first weeks of picketing by the striking United Farm Workers in the southern end of the San Joaquin Valley.

"It's your fault, you told us we wouldn't have any trouble if we signed with the Teamsters," were the words William D. Mooney hurled at John Kovacevich after UFW pickets lined up 30 strike breakers from his fields April 4, "you're losing a lot of money," he said.

This exchange was witnessed by over 100 UFW strikers who began picketing March 25, Mooney is one of several grape growers who apparently feels large growers like Kovacevich, Roberts Farms, Tejano and Guzman bullied them into signing with the Teamsters in 1973.

After a Salinas judge issued a statewide injunction limiting pickets at liquor stores to four in March, the boycott efforts of the UFW were restricted.

"In the storm where we boycotted you could see very few pickets, and no people would say that our Union was on the way down," said Murtagh. "Then, we had a meeting and the idea came up to make these marches like we did in earlier years, so that the people would come out and identify with the movement."

Not everyone is happy about the marches. During the march in Porterville, a Teamster who works for Gallo Wineries, Inc., told EL MALCRIADO: "This year is the last stand of Chavers. He won't be here next year, so we won't have any trouble if we sign now went out of style four years ago."

During the farm worker march in Richgrove April 3, an automobile side-swiped the marchers at 40 miles an hour nearby strikers. (continued on page 10)
Farm worker tells why he strikes

'I have suffered all my life'

Why do farm workers strike? Why do they risk injury, insults and threats of violence on the picket lines and in their homes? Why do they have the patience to shoot across the vineyards from early morning to late afternoon, until feet are tired and voices are gone? Manuel Vargas explains why from the Coachella picket line.

I am on strike because I have suffered all my life. I started working at the age of 8 or 9 years old. Since 1934, I have been abused and mistreated by the foremen, pushed hard by the foremen. I grew up, I've opened my eyes and know what is going on. That's why I'm fighting for La Causa.

That's why I love La Causa and to let all those people, those elderly persons, and the youth who are working (as strikebreakers), who have not suffered as much or whose parents never told them about how they suffered before.

A worker had to take off his hat to be able to talk to the foreman. And they still try to play on fear of the grower, the foremen, and many are still used to that system. They still try to keep us scared of the grower.

They say, "Come, come to work here. You are here to work, not to stand around. Here you have to work. You don't come here to be lazy." So my kidneys and back are worn out from working with the short-handled hoe in this valley.

I'm not getting strike benefits, but I love to come to fight for our children, and youth in general, what I have been saying, that the movement in order to teach my kids, I feel joy and pride that with our entire people no longer say, "Oh, there comes the boast blend.

feeling, with a yoke around our necks.

And now I am sacrificing, teaching and explaining how we suffered before the Union came, how our parents and our grandparents suffered. We were humiliated all the time, The wouldn't open our eyes, so we wouldn't know how to defend ourselves.

And on fears shaking with fear, not knowing what to do.

But do you know what they (the growers) wanted? They did not want us to go to school so we could be strong. We give each other strength, that's the only way we are going to win.

Mass marches rally support

oped two small boys. The car was stopped and its driver det-

ended by the foremen. I grew up, I've opened my eyes and know what is going on. That's why I'm fighting for La Causa.

And in the large cities, there are a lot of sisters and brothers who know La Causa, who know suffering, who have a generous heart to help in one way or another.

We are stirring things up in the valley and told the growers like flies, but the principal effort is the boycott. Here, we are slowing productivity, so that it won't grow correctly.

The boycotters are our best supporters. Without them, we would gain nothing with our shouts in the fields, but we must fight harder here so that the boycotters will be stronger. We give each other strength, that's the only way we are going to win.

Back in the vineyards of La-

non and Delano Teamster or-

officers appeared to be equally ner-

vous. Farm workers reported-

men would say very frankly, "They have
gotten the spirit to be strong in the fields and demand more from the Teamsters. The growers are feeling the pressure because they know that many of their workers are strikers and that they will not put up with injustices any longer.

The picket lines are scoring some successes. In addition to the 30 workers who walked out at Monterey April 4, picketers estimate that close to 12 workers joined the strike each day.

On April 16, organizer Lope Margulis took the newly-organized Almaden contract (See related article on page 16) to the picket line and read it to the strikes at the Korczick ranch.

Let people start to come out," said Margulis later, "and Thompson, one of the foremen, started to run back and forth from one corner to the other saying to the workers, 'Don't believe him, don't leave the picket line. Please, don't leave the fields! He ran like crazy and then went to get a bullhorn and told his workers, 'It doesn't matter if you work slow, don't leave the fields.'"
Fred Abad, now vice-president of the UFW ranch committee at Freedman, came to the U.S. in 1929 when he was sixteen. He went to work harvesting onions near San Jose for 25¢ an hour.

"We lived in the camps," he says, "where everyone was a hired hand, taking the lowest wages in the country.

"It is with the Delano strike of 1933 that they began to live a different life, he said. "We knew it wouldn't be easy to strike, but we did anyway, we stayed in the camp.

"Then one day they cut off the water, then the electricity, and then in another two days the gas, and we had to cook outside. Then they padlocked the doors and we had to sleep under the trees."

"I told Marco that the camp was our home, that it belonged partly to the workers because we were living in the barn with the horses who lived there were paid ten cents an hour less. He didn't say anything.

"We've worked hard to build what we have," says Claro Runtal. "But at least we know we have showed the poor working people all over the world that we have a high spirit.

"On the picket line I try to explain to the scabs that our lives are better because of the union. Many nights I do not sleep, thinking, trying to see what is the key, the key so that I can open their minds, I am not educated but once I start talking to them about this I cannot stop."

"Who demanded higher wages from the growers? We did because we are organized! You are hard workers like we are, I say to them, 'Your children will have to work under these harsh conditions if we don't change it.'"

"But how can we change it if we aren't united?'"

Bob Armington

Claro Runtal

"With our work we have supported the growers and we have supported the community," says Freedman worker Claro Runtal, who is nearly 70. "We have supported the whole country, but what did we get for it? We got the lowest wages in the country.

"Put now with the union is in our time, it is a new era in our lives, it is our time to sing."

Runtal came to the U.S. in 1930 at a time when thousands of Filipinos were brought to work in the fields. Young, strong, and unmarried, the growers considered them a perfect work force to move the crops.

Runtal worked in the asparagus fields in Stockton since 1963 when his back could no longer take the strain. "In 1930 we got 30¢ an hour in the asparagus but they used to cheat by telling us the price they were getting for it was less than it really was.

"Then they would take $25 out of every paycheck and hold it until the end of the season just to make sure we stayed for the whole season."

Fred Abad

"I'm too old to quit now," he says. "I'm too old to quit now," he says.

"The first strike I was in was up in Stockton, in 1937; the depression times most of you here wasn't even born yet. The biggest strike they had was the spinach strike when 85 people got shot. They closed the county for 6 weeks. I got shot too, I still got bicus in my shoulder. They were from the company vigilantes that did it, but we ran right out and they never came back any more.

You had a lot of women working down there, and longshoremen, warehousemen and all that. They were all working in the canneries. After the strike we started to sign all the canneries up in the whole state. And then these same son-of-a-bitches put a table in front of the cannery saying TEAMSTERS, if you want to work in there? they said, 'you got to sign for the Teamster union.' They got most of them that way. It's the same thing up here, they've been doing this for years! Here in Coachella in the first time.

"It was sick when Delano came around," he said, "but I got four years working with the Union here in Coachella. What the hell you gonna do? You got it in your blood and you just can't get away from it.

"I still want revenge for those farmers who shot me in the back, and from those Teamsters who stole our contracts away. They even put out buttons about all that saying "Last We Forget-April 25, 1934.'"

Just look at the Teamsters that are pushing in here. They're taking the working man's money, and if you're over 55 you can't get a job because you can't work fast enough for them. And the Teamsters are not hiring the workers; it's the labor contractors.

The labor contractor over near the camp where I live, he was looking for people to go work in the grapes this morning. But he couldn't get anyone. Nobody went with him.

I educate those guys over at the camp, I bring the paper out to them and show them about the bus crash, and the asparagus strike, and then I say, 'You still want to work in the grapes?'"

"Do you know how long it is going to take for the growers to realize that the Teamsters are here to just fool around and steal their money?" he asked El Malcriado!

"It will take as long as we get the pressure on the growers.

We got to put the pressure on there. put out leaflets, keep the picket line up. With the picket lines and the boycott we've got to put the pressure on all we can...and just never give up!"
BLYTHE BUS MASSACRE SPURS SAFETY BILL

SACRAMENTO, CA. -- A bill to require safety inspections for farm labor buses and training for farm labor contractors may soon become state law.

Strongly backed by the United Farm Workers of America, the California State Assembly by a 67-8 vote March 14 and will now be considered by the Senate Transportation Committee. Assembly Majority Leader Jack Linsky introduced the bill (AB 2975) in the aftermath of the January 15 Blythe bus massacre in which 15 Imperial Valley labor contractors were killed when a labor contractor bus plunged into an irrigation drainage ditch.

The California Highway Patrol found several serious mechanical defects in the bus, but said the crash was caused because the driver was going too fast. The federal National Transportation Safety Board, on the other hand, concluded that the bus was unstable because of the impact of the crash. The NTSB found that the seats had been secured to the floor by only one thread of each sheet metal screw. "I never heard of the problems with farm buses until the accident in Blythe," said Linsky, chairman of the Assembly Committee on Industrial Safety. "If I had known about these safety problems I would have done something about it long ago, because farm workers are entitled to the same protections as school children when they are being transported. "Unfortunately, in human affairs, it is taken for granted to make us see how bad things are."

The bill authorizes the state Labor Commissioner to revoke of refuse to renew the license of any labor contractor who fails to maintain his buses according to the state Vehicle Code or who employs a driver who is not properly trained and licensed. It also requires the Highway Patrol to inspect every farm labor bus at least once a year for mechanical violations, and establishes a required driver training course similar to those presently required of school bus drivers.

Currently, CHP inspections of farm buses are possible but not required. The owner of the Blythe massacre bus, labor contractor Jesus Ayala, actually had his license renewed several days after the crash.

The only punishment he received from the state is a $50 fine for three infractions of the California Vehicle Code. Ignoring the true cause of the deaths, the bus seats, the CHP charged Ayala for the faulty electrical system and ineptive emergency brake system in the massacre bus and an exhaust tailpipe that terminated underneath the bus.

The Highway Patrol has not supported the bus safety bill.

Pudinski himself has been quoted as saying he thinks driver training for farm bus drivers would be a good idea but that laws requiring inspections are not. However, it is known that a memo by an official of the CHP's Motor Carrier Safety Division is circulating within the CHP urging that regulations concerning seat anchorage in farm buses be strengthened to meet school bus standards.

The memo also urges the prohibition of lengthwise seating in farm trucks, which have similar seat construction as the Border Patrol van involved in the recent accident near El Centro. The Teamsters Union has endorsed the bus safety bill, but the Teamster's support for the bill will probably not quiet bitter feelings among Imperial Valley farm workers, still outraged by the Teamster's attitude toward the victims of the Blythe bus crash and their families. The bus was remote to fields covered by Teamster contracts.

Que Viva La Causa!

The Blythe bus massacre

por Francisco Nufiez Gomez
(Translated from the Spanish)

I remember well, it was the 15th of January, the day of the accident. The contractor's bus turned over, trapping the people inside.

Pablo Navarro Arenalo was the bus driver. Every time I hear this corridor I feel sad and pained, thinking of the scene that happened on the road to Blythe.

In Calexico they reported what had happened. Among the nineteen dead there were children of the Mendoza family, Manuel, two daughters and a son.

At the United Farm Workers where the news arrived, the teamsters identified their leader was immediately told and right away Cesar Chavez arrived at the consulate.

Two countries became one in the gathering of the mourners, in Calexico they held the mass with the bodies of the dead present, with six priests and one bishop and a multitude of people.

On to Mexicali protesting we go, carrying the dead with us marching four deep in rows, so that the growers can see what we are fighting back.

Arise campesino, with the bodies of the dead present, with six priests and one bishop and a multitude of people.

RIVERA LICUOR

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BLYTHE BUS MASSACRE SPURS SAFETY BILL

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Unsafe seating condemned

No laws cover van in Border Patrol crash

FL CENTRO, Ca.—An unsafe seating arrangement and overcrowding contributed significantly to the high death toll in the March 7 Border Patrol van accident near here, according to an investigation by FL MALCRIADO. The findings of the investigation also indicate that such Border Patrol vans are completely unregulated by federal and state safety standards.

The Border Patrol van, carrying 18 Mexican farm workers being deported for entering the U.S. illegally, slammed into the rear of a parked truck on Interstate 8 after swerving off the road. 12 of the farm workers and the driver of the van, Border Patrol officer Albert Field, were killed, and the other 6 seriously injured. According to the Border Patrol, 18 was the capacity of the van.

The California Highway Patrol concluded that both drivers, Albert Field, 61, fell asleep at the wheel, allowing the van to drift off the road and into the parked truck. The CHP report said that no mechanical defects were found on the van which contributed to the accident. However, investigations undertaken by Federal agencies have not yet been completed.

'Objectional seating arrangement'

As with the Blythe bus massacre of January 15, however, in which 19 farm workers drowned in a drainage ditch, the report does not probe the factors which may in fact have led to the deaths of the passengers.

The seating in the rear compartment of the van, separated from the driver's compartment by a wire mesh screen, consists of three parallel benches running lengthwise along the van and a fourth bench backed up against the screen. Of the 18 men seated on these benches, 12 of them suffered broken necks and other injuries. The other six were thrown about and seriously injured.

"We were all squished together on that bus," recalled Vicente Ramirez, one of the survivors. "Without luggage, it was really tight. Some of the companions didn't fit, so they went on top of the rest."

According to Jack Baird of the federal funded accident research project at the University of Southern California, "Someone ought to take a look at this." That kind of arrangement is certainly objectionable, and it's hard to believe they would put so many people into such a small space.

"With the seats facing the side I can just visualize the necks flopping upon impact, perhaps many times with test dummies," he continued.

"If the seats had been facing forward and the passengers wearing seat belts without a doubt there would have been a reduction in the number of deaths, a lot of the deaths would positively been prevented."

Outside the law

Each sector commander of the Border Patrol has the authority to establish the seating pattern in the vehicles used in his zone for transporting people without proper papers to the border, according to Captain Henry Fechlin, commander of the El Centro Border Patrol. "We want to utilize the space in the van for the utmost efficiency and comfort of the passengers," he said.

A Highway Patrol official involved in the investigation said that three of the seats in the van were actually seat-backs converted into seats and installed after the van was purchased, but Fechlin denied this.

The Border Patrol has no safety regulations concerning the transportation of "illegal aliens," that he knows of, Fechlin said, nor any regulations specifically regarding seats.

The U.S. Department of Transportation does have a series of regulations for vehicles used in interstate commerce, but government agencies such as the Border Patrol are exempt from them.

Federal regulations regarding labor contractor trucks, which have a similar lengthwise bench configuration for seats, do apply to Border Patrol vehicles because they do not meet the definition of transporting farming workers and to and from work.

California state law requires that all vehicles operated in the state, including federal vehicles, meet state standards, but Border Patrol vans are still exempt because there is no category in the law that includes such vehicles. And state laws regarding farm labor contractor trucks again do not apply because the Border Patrol vehicles are not involved in carrying farm workers to and from work.

This series of loophole, Border Patrol vehicles appear to stand completely outside the law.

"I looked all over the federal regulations for something about these vehicles," said one CHP official, "and it's baffling that they don't have some regulations for them."

Inadequate by comparison

Farm labor trucks, however, are the closest category to the Border Patrol vans in terms of seating configuration, and many of the vans to state and federal regulations shows that the Border Patrol vehicles do not even meet up to these minimal standards. For example, federal and state regulations require 18 inches of seat space per person. Each passenger in the Border Patrol van had between 10 and 14 inches.

Drivers of these vehicles and of the full-size Border Patrol buses also stand outside state and federal safety regulations. Although they must have state and U.S. government driver's licenses, there is no requirement of a chauffeur's license or certificate and special training such as required for passenger and school bus drivers and labor contractor truck drivers.

"The drivers are our regular detention officers," explained Omar J. Sewell, director of the El Centro Detention Facility, from which the van that crashed departed. "They have to be licensed to drive the size vehicle they are driving but the cargo is not specified."

CHP report wrong

Establishing the passenger capacity of the van is a matter of simple arithmetic, according to Captain Fechlin. By taking the maximum allowable weight for the vehicle, according to manufacturer's standards, and subtracting the weight of the vehicles when it is empty, you establish the allowable weight for passengers, said Fechlin. "Then you divide this by about 150 which is how much an average Mexican weighs and that tells you how many you can fit in," he said.

For this van, apparently, the result was 18.

Dodge literature for the civilian passenger vehicle of the same size as this van (1972 Tradesman 300) sets the seating capacity as 16 in the rear compartment, in seats facing forward. California state law limits the capacity of vans of this size to 16 when they are used for schoolchildren.

Despite the Highway Patrol reports claim that the vehicle was not overweight with this many people aboard, the weight exceeded the maximum allowable by 300 pounds. This report made use of inaccurate statistics about the weight of the passengers and did not include the luggage that was aboard.

"300 pounds over the weight limit isn't that much, but it is always possible that in a strong wind an overloaded van might swerve off the road more easily if the driver didn't have complete control of the wheel," said Jack Baird of USC. "And besides they had no business putting that many people in there to begin with."

Secret regulations?

Despite the Highway Patrol report recommending that length-wise bench seating be prohibited in farm labor trucks as unsafe, (A spokesman for CHP commissioner Walter Podinski denied any knowledge of it.)

Meanwhile a memo circulating within the California Highway Patrol recommending that length-wise bench seating be prohibited for school buses was unsound. (A spokesman for CHP commissioner Walter Podinski denied any knowledge of it.)

The memo apparently written in response to the Blythe bus massacre and the Border Patrol accident, also recommends that seat occupant regulations for farm labor buses be upgraded to those of school buses.

Sources:
1. CHP report
2 & 3. Imperial County Corner Leonard Speer
4. Omar Sewell, director, El Centro BP detention facility

The following chart demonstrates these calculations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross vehicle weight: 7700 (maximum allowable)</th>
<th>CHP REPORT</th>
<th>ACTUAL WEIGHT</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weight of van, empty 4910</td>
<td>4910</td>
<td>Weight of van, empty</td>
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<td>18 passengers @ 135 2430</td>
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<td>18 passengers @ 152</td>
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<td>driver 130</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>168 driver</td>
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<td>luggage 180</td>
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<td>7130</td>
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Secret regulations?

It doesn't matter who the people are, they are entitled to safe transportation."

"We don't look at it as trying to jam people in there," said Lowell Martincado, associate deputy regional commander for management of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, "we're not insensitive to the loss of life."

"I would be surprised if it was overloaded," he said, "because we keep a close eye on these things, but if a van is overloaded we take disciplinary action. But we're waiting for the official reports before we make any recommendations."

Contrary to what Fechlin told El Malcriado, Martincado said the Border Patrol did have regulations regarding transporting illegal aliens but said he could not release a copy because they are "internal instructions."

El Malcriado — April 17, 1974 — Page 13
Farm Worker Alert

What you should know about food stamps

(1) Striking workers and their families are entitled to food stamps.
(2) It is your right to receive food stamps if you and your family have little income and few resources (property).
(3) You have the right whether or not you are an American citizen.
(4) You have the right no matter how short a time you have lived in your present community.
(5) You do not have to receive welfare to receive food stamps. If you do get welfare you are automatically eligible for food stamps.
(6) Everyone in your household does not have to be related to each other.
(7) If you are an adult in good health you must register for work unless you are already working but you are NOT REQUIRED TO WORK.
(8) Your house, lot, and one car do not count to disqualify you.
(9) The food stamp program was not designed as a welfare program. The welfare department is merely the agency which runs the food stamp program for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose is to improve the diet of low-income households. But, if there are 2 or more people, and only 1 is over 60 years of age, the household can have resources up to $3,000.
(10) Food stamps are a bargain. If you have no income you can get free food stamps. A four person household with no income can qualify for free stamps totaling $142 per month. Beginning July 1 this will increase to $156.

What you should do about food stamps

Demand your share. Several million dollars worth of food stamps go unused each year in the San Joaquin Valley alone because the very people who need them aren't getting them. The money for this program is money you have worked for all your life. It is not the government's money. Apply for food stamps today.

Campesino Centers answer your questions

Food stamps are coupons that can be used to buy food. They can increase the amount of food you buy because the amount of stamps you receive is greater than the amount you pay. Food stamps allow you to buy more food with less money.

What can you buy with food stamps?
Any food except liquor, tobacco or pet food. No non-food items such as paper products. You can buy seeds and plants to produce food.

Where can you use food stamps?
At any store that accepts food stamps.

Who can get food stamps?
Households on welfare and households not on welfare.

What is a household?
A group of people - related or unrelated - who live together as an economic unit. This can include labor camps, families, roomers, boarders, or any group of people who share housing costs and personal expenses.

What are resources?
Cash or items that can be quickly exchanged for cash except: your house, lot, and one car and any additional cars that are needed for employment. Your personal effects and household good are not counted. Neither is the cash value of life insurance.

How many resources can you have and still be eligible?
It depends on how many people are in the household. But, if there are 2 or more people, and at least 1 is over 60 years old, the household can have resources up to $3,000.

What is income?
The income expected in the coming months (not the income received before applying) by all household members except: the earnings of a student under 18, irregular income in small amounts, money from insurance settlements, lump-sum payments, and the free use of a house.

How many food stamps will you get?
All households of the same size get the same amount of stamps. The amount of food stamps you receive is called the "coupon allotment." For a household of 1 person this is $42, for 2 it is $74, for 3 it is $112, for 4 it is $142, for 5 it is $156, for 6 it is $194, etc. In July these amounts will be increased.

How much will you pay for your stamps?
The amount you pay depends on your income after the deductions. The higher your income, the more you pay.

Can people on strike get food stamps?
Yes. No household can be refused stamps because a member of the household is not working because of a strike at his or her regular place of employment.

How long do you have to live in one place before you are eligible?
Yes. You are eligible right away.

What happens if you move?
When you move from one county or state to another, you remain eligible for 60 days. After 60 days you must be recertified at your new location.

How do you apply for food stamps?
All you have to do is fill out an application and be interviewed.

Applications are available in Spanish. Your Campesino Center will help you complete this form and go with you to the welfare department for your interview. The center will, also, tell you what documents to take with you to verify the information requested on the form: such as proof of income (pay stubs), medical bills or receipts, rent or house payment receipts, utility bills, birth certificates, student identification, etc.

If you are unable to apply in person because of distance to the welfare office, availability of transportation, or your health a Campesino Center worker can apply for you and, also, purchase your food stamp coupon for you.

What happens after you apply?
The food stamp office will decide on your application WITHIN 30 DAYS of the day you apply. A home visit is NOT required. If you are found to be eligible, you will be mailed an identification card. Then, each month you will be allowed an authorization-to-purchase (ATP) card which will show you how many stamps you should receive and how much you should pay.

What is a fair hearing?
The way to APPEAL any action taken by the food stamp office that is harmful to you. You always have the right to a fair hearing whenever you disagree with any food stamp office action. Your Campesino Center will help you get a fair hearing and go with you to the hearing.

Demand your food stamp rights!
HELP WANTED

Manager for grocery Co-operative being formed in Santa Monica needs manager.
Requirements: Grocery management experience. Co-op or related movement experience, not dogmatic about natural foods.
Salary: Negotiable.
Contact: George Tucker, Co-op Organizing Group, 11615 Mississippi Ave., L.A. Calif. 90025.

HELP WANTED

Cook needed for Union Headquarters - Farm Worker Conferences. Room, Board, $5.00 per week. Write Volunteer Dept., United Farm Workers of America, P.O. Box 62, Keene, CA. 93531 or call (805) 822-5571 and ask for Volunteer Dept.

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Indian newspapers available!

Wounded Knee -- why did it happen, and has it changed things? Are old Indian treaties still valid? Is the Bureau of Indian Affairs an advocate for Indians or a colonial bureaucracy? The best source of news about such issues facing American Indians is Indian people themselves, and two of the best newspapers covering basic Indian problems, Indian Movement, and current issues from the Indian viewpoint are:

AKWESASNE NOTES, a bimonthly newspaper of 40-60 pages, No fixed rate for subscriptions, but a donation is hoped for. Write Akwesasne Notes, Mohawk Nation, via Rooseveltown, N.Y. 13683

WASSAJA, "A National Newspaper of Indian America." Published monthly by the All-Indian American Indian Historical Society. ($5/year for Indians). Write Wassaia, 1451 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, Ca. 94117.

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El Malcriado - April 17, 1974 - Page 15
Almaden contract renewed; Teamsters driven from fields

Hollister, Ca.--Almaden Vineyards, Inc. renewed its contract with the United Farm Workers of America in late March less than ten days after the workers chased a group of Teamster organizers out of the fields.

The new three-year contract, which covers 930 workers at peak season, calls for an initial base pay wage increase of $15 an hour retroactive to January 1, and another increase of ten cents an hour to $2.95 on July 1. Then, the pay scale increases $15 an hour each year in all job categories.

The contract also provides for a union hiring hall, a 100 per worker-per-hour payment by the company to the Robert Kennedy Medical Plan and $5 an hour to the Juan de la Cruz Pension Fund, established by Teamster protection, and such benefits as six paid holidays, paid vacations, time and a half to work on Sunday, and leave of absence without loss of seniority.

"This is the best new form labor contract in California," said Cesar Chavez, who signed the contract along with the entire UFW executive board on March 30.

"It's a magnificient contract that we have," said Concepcion Gutierrez, a worker at Almaden's Paicenes Ranch near Hollister. "It think it sets a standard that the other companies will have to sign also. They don't know what to do with their wives."

Chavez si, Teamsters no!

Teamster organizers appeared at the Almeden ranches in San Lucas and Paicenes during the recent contract negotiations between UFW and the company, apparently hoping to persuade the workers not to demand a contract renewal.

"The first day when they came was a Wednesday," recalled Jose Medina of Lupe Solis' crew at the San Lucas Ranch. "They told us they had good benefits, a medical plan and everything. But we know this is nothing but lies. They were trying to take advantage of us.

"The next day the same six or seven came, and we told them to leave, that we didn't want anything to do with them. They included that we didn't have a contract or a union, and we got annoyed and told them they had five minutes to leave.

"And that's where it started. One of them thought that one of us had called him a 'son of a bitch,' and they started towards one of our brothers. A rock was thrown, and it hit him on the knee. Then we all went after them together and they jumped into their pickup and left."

Lupe Solis, leader of this crew, later said the Teamsters must have thought the crew would be easy to sign up, "Or maybe they came to terrorize us," he said.

"If we only fought with them if they want to provoke us we have to do our duty."

"Later they came back and threatened to take us to court," according to Adalberto Cornejo of the same crew. "So what, let them take us where they will. All we can say is that there is no contract of Cesar Chavez, and there will never be anyone else to guide us than the union of our president."

The Teamsters also visited crews at the Paicenes Ranch, "I got so mad that I felt a pain in my ulcer," said Arcadio Torres, "and they had to take me to the hospital. I think the Teamsters are like Nixon -- they promise but they never deliver."

Workers negotiate

The new contract was negotiated by UFW negotiator David Burcuz and a committee of sixteen Almaden workers.

Jesus Rosales, a member of the Ranch Committee at the Paicenes Ranch, said, "In the negotiations we had a person representing each aspect of the work, for example a field worker, a representative of the union, a representative looks for the follow-workers of that department, so in this way we can come to a better agreement. It's better when each department is represented, because they are the ones who know the work.

"Then during the general meetings we inform the membership of how the negotiations are going.

"The company doesn't really appreciate our being there," said Juan Aguirre of the San Lucas Ranch, "because they'd rather negotiate with somebody who doesn't know anything about the operation than to have us there, saying, 'Well, you did this wrong or you need to do that.'"

"If David won't do that, all they'd say is well, you don't know anything about that because you're not out there."

Contract helps organizing

"The wages are good, up 25% the first year," said Aguirre, "but the way I see it, the important thing is to have the contract itself. The contract is what provides for the ranch committees, the hiring hall, and the health and safety committees. With these things we organize ourselves.

"And it's exactly these things that the Teamsters contracts don't have, that's how they don't permit the workers to organize," he said.

Under all UFW contracts, the workers elect a "ranch committee" to participate in settling grievances (disputes) over the interpretation of the contract and to generally act as the workers' representative to the company. At the Paicenes ranch, the committee also runs the union hiring hall, where workers are sent to the fields of the basis of seniority, on the length of time worked for the company.

"The contract is only as strong as the ranch committee," said Tony Sanchez, a crew leader at the Paicenes ranch, "and we have a strong committee here."

The health and safety committee is made up of three workers and three company personnel to enforce the extensive health and safety clauses of the contract. These clauses eliminate paraathon and a number of other dangerous pesticides and establish procedures for the use of others, including detailed record keeping, safety clothing and equipment provided by the company, medical testing, and time limits which must be observed before workers can re-enter a field after pesticides have been used.

In addition, the company must provide toilet facilities, cold drinking water, and showers with individual sinks, and a fifteen-minute rest break for each four-hour work period.

Unity was the key

Throughout the negotiations, Almaden workers picketed local stores in Hollister and King City a part of the Gallo boycott campaign. "They saw what we were doing there," said one worker, "and they must have figured if we would work so hard for the Gallo workers that we'd go twice as hard on Almaden if they didn't sign."

"And we told them in the negotiations that if they didn't sign, we would not be at work the next day, we'd grab the flag and put it on there on the road by the highway."

"And we're right," concluded Arcadio Torres, "for workers in other places to receive the news about the struggle and the unity that exists within our union. And we are very proud of this union, because it defends our interests and our rights as workers."

"Next is the contract with Paul Masson," said Jose Medrano, "which expires on September of this year, and the workers there know they have the help of the compañeros at Almaden."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Classification</th>
<th>Almaden/UFW</th>
<th>Gallo/Teamsters</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Labor</td>
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<td>Equipment Maintenance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hourly Wage Rates, as of April 1, 1974 in new UFW Almaden contract, compared to Teamster Gallo contract.

Christian Brothers, Noviate renew contracts

As FL MALCRIADO went to press, UFW signed a new contract with Noviate and the formal signing of a new contract with Christian Brothers is expected soon. Both companies are California wineries.

Christian Brothers first signed a UFW contract in 1967 covering 500 workers at ranches in St. Helena, Redesly and Napa. The contract with Noviate, also first signed in 1967, covers 24 workers at a ranch in Los Gatos.