1976 — The Year of the Soaring Eagle

Los Angeles is Mobilizing

An intensive six-week door-to-door canvassng campaign will begin on Jan. 24, according to Ken Fujimoto, L.A. boycott director. "Because the farm workers have spoken so decisively in the election on the side of the UFW," Fujimoto said, "we see in this new historic stage in the boycott movement and it is necessary to consolidate our support as well as to enlist additional help in these very critical days ahead."

The seven-day, 60-mile march throughout Los Angeles County has set the stage for the new drive according to Fujimoto. The first aggressive door-to-door drive throughout much of Los Angeles County is aimed at:

* Educating the public about the latest stage of the organizing drive taking place in the fields of California.
* Further encouraging support of the UFW drives to get consumers to buy produce with the Black Eagle label.
* Recruiting more assistance in the forthcoming campaigns to support the UFW.

"We want all those who have supported us in the past to join in the door-to-door campaign," Fujimoto said. "All who want can come out by contacting the offices at 1434 W. Olympic Blvd. (phone 363-1338). Also there is an increased need for full-time volunteers and we hope to recruit many new people in the course of this canvassng." After a week of preparation the drive will be kicked off on Jan. 24. It will come to a close on Feb. 28.

The Black Eagle is flying in the fields as never before. Now the goal of the L.A. support movement is to help make the Eagle soar in the city as well as in the fields.

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For farm workers 1976 can be the peak of many victories. New contracts, renewed contracts, service centers, medical clinics, pension plans, health care programs, new types of rights to vote...the list is endless. But it can only happen with your help. Use your voice in the Los Angeles county to realize the farm workers' dreams. If you're willing to make a three-month commitment to a righteous cause, we are looking for good dedicated workers to effect social changes. Call UFW, 361-1338, ask for Vicki Now.

Contonued on Page 5

See Pages 3 and 4 for L.A. March Story and Pictures
A Working Visit to Fields
F.C.L.A. Boycott Staff

According to peak-season harvests, the Los Angeles Boycott is currently situated in geographic proximity to ranch election sites. As a result, the boycott staff in L.A. has recently had the opportunity to travel to the Imperial Valley and work with the actual field workers.

On Dec. 29, 16 members of the boycott arrived in San Ysidro near the Mexican border to learn first hand about the election campaign in the San Diego County. Scott Washburn, UFW regional director, held the staff that business in the area encountered mostly compiling rancher security lists which is done by the workers themselves for use in the UFW hiring hall other contracts are signed. Of the 16 elections already won, four have been entitled and four are in the courts (of which three expect to be overturned).

Tomatoes and celery were the ready crops at this time as the L.A. staff was immediately utilized in the 160-hectare's works of ballot letting various ranches. Since workers often rotate among different ranches during harvest, it was important to inform all workers regardless whether they had voted in previous elections.

That evening the group traveled south to the border town of Calexico, where a massive organizing campaign is pending with the herculean efforts of Marshall Ganz, director of the Imperial Valley drive, briefed everyone on the situation, including the winning of 13 of the 14 elections up to that time. These election results, Ganz contended, are a likely indication of what would have happened earlier in other regions had the Agricultural Labor Relations Board enacted the law properly. The union is now putting a concerted effort into organizing workers on the Bruce Church Ranch, the nation's third largest producer of lettuce.

At daybreak the following morning the boycott staff was divided into four groups and sent with organizers to ballistic different work crews coming over from Mexico. The next morning, the group traveled to the Bruce Church property in Arizona to talk with workers, while another group listened at a local labor camp and the remaining two groups went to witness elections on two separate ranches, both won by the UFW.

By afternoon the L.A. staff regrouped and went out to bill board at the border where workers were crossing back to Mexico; another billboard line went to trouble the labor bosses arriving at "El Hoyo" (The Hole), the world's highest shape-up area, and a third line stationed itself along the main street of Calexico — at unprofitable farm workers to vote for the UFW. "Ahora es cuando" (now is the time).

The final act of the program was a farm worker community meeting Tuesday evening which started off with traditional union songs, then dealt with workers' issues and ended with recognition and gratitude to the Los Angeles Boycott staff and its dedication to the farm worker cause.

Eagle Flies in Rose Parade

Spectators watching the 67th annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena on New Year's Day might also have glimpsed members of the Los Angeles Boycott complete with billboards and waving union flags as the flowery floats cruised by.

On the afternoon of the 31st, Echo Park supporter and former UFW organizer Susan Metcalf received a citizen's spot directly adjacent from the TV cameos and began the long wait for morning. Temperatures dropped into the 30's during the night when she was joined by eight other farm worker supporters and UFW co-ordinator Concepcion Terraza.

By dawn more than 1.30 million people had lined up along the 5-mile route. On several occasions during the two-hour parade the boycotters were harassed by Pasadena police when they were caught with their giant Billboards flag placed on a fence. The group, however, refused to comply after seeing numerous other signs displayed all around them.

Source estimates that more than 100,000 viewers around the world watched this spectacle on television.

At Last ALRB Cases
Gunmen in Posse

At long last the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board has issued a formal complaint against the Posse Comitatus for painting guns at organizers of the United Farm Workers outside a Stockton tomato field last September.

The complaint issued Dec. 18 lists 20 members of the Posse Comitatus, as many as 10 John Does and the Western Tomato Growers and Shippers, Inc. The ALRB asks that the vigilant group and the group be requested to make a public apology to the workers during the next peak season and also a public statement to the employees stating that the employer will not engage in such conduct again.

The complaint also calls for the Western Tomato Growers to permit UFW organizers expanded access to their fields during the coming harvest. The employer is further required to file a notice containing the terms of the ALRB's order in writing to all peak season employees.

The complaint is an outgrowth of confrontations that occurred Sept. 23-25 when organizers for the UFW attempted to enter a Western Tomato Growers field but were blocked by dozens of Posse members armed with pick handles, pistols, and shotguns.

A hearing on the complaint will be held in Stockton on Feb. 22, 1976 in the California State Office Building, 31 E. Channel, Stockton.

This is a very important case for the ALRB and the UFW because hundreds of UFW organizers were prevented from entering the fields this summer by employees in spite of the ALRB ruling allowing organizers the right to enter the fields to talk to the workers.

After months of investigation the ALRB has issued a complaint against the most serious offender in the entire state, the Posse Comitatus and their complicity with the company.

New Cabrillo Village Battle

The Los Angeles Boycott staff joined members of the San Francisco/San Jose boycott staff, and approximately 75 residents of Cabrillo Village, to demonstrate against the Supervisorial Board of Stockton, California.

The group marched several miles through freezing weather in candlelight procession from the C.V. labor camp to a vacant lot across from the house of Stockton Labor Assoc. Manager Carl McKnight, chanting "Justice Now" and "We want our homes."

Thanks to several members of the San Francisco field office, explained that residents of Cabrillo Village, which is owned by Stockton Labor Association, have been continually harassed by the company for their strong union sympathies and were served eviction notices last fall in an effort to eliminate the Chavetas (see story last issue). Those who refused to leave were intimidated by the workers, the association attempted to sell the camp valued at $40,000 to Hetero Villasenes, a labor contractor, for a measly $65,000.

Mounting pressure on Villasenes due to active protests from the C.V. inhabitants, in addition to statewide attention brought about by UFW concern, forced him to withdraw from the deal, thus opening channels again for possible purchase by the lesion pickers.

While McKnight is refusing at this time to meet with the workers to discuss the transaction, the Los Angeles Boycott is planning a massive letter-writing campaign of persuasion, to McKnight and phasing popular support of the workers in their right to buy their own houses, as well as considering the more forceful alternative of a boycott on Stockton which markets all 82 SF citrus picked by residents of Cabrillo Village.

The rally ended with a lively teatro performed by the San Francisco/San Jose Boycott and C.V. residents enacting the history of this controversy, and a midnight mass.
Bruce Church Agrees After Foreman Sings

One of the more dramatic Agricultural Labor Relations Board hearings took place in El Centro in early December when a series of unfair labor charges against the Bruce Church Company were publicly ventilated. And the outcome of the weak-kneed public expression of the company's misdeeds was to some measure a vindication of the UFW's position.

It all ended up with the company agreeing to a series of actions which should make it possible to get a fair election on its properties in the near future. These are some of the things the company agreed to do:

- Report to Ramon Rubio and pay him back pay of over $2,000. Rubio was among those who had been fired by the company and the UFW had charged that it was because of his union activity.
- Agree to allow union organizers to board company buses during lunch breaks to speak with workers and distribute literature.
- A set of rules was outlined under which this will take place.
- Allow a union organizer in the fields DURING WORKING HOURS for organizational purposes for each crew and distribute literature.
- Finish a list by crew of the names and addresses of all the company's agricultural employees.

In addition the company agreed to pool in Spanish and English a notice that will state "the law provides that all employees have the right to organize and choose any union they desire. This right cannot be interfered with by anyone. The employer also has the right to call with representatives of any union and sign authorization cards for any union. The company intends to comply with the law and hereby encourages the employees to exercise their rights under the law."

Putting to rest rumors, repeatedly by foreman and other company representatives, that the company would lay off many workers or go out of business if the UFW won representation rights, the company publicly stated that it "has no intention to go out of business or reduce acreage in California regardless of which union the employees choose to represent them."

What brought all this about? At long last the law was beginning to work as originally intended. And at the hearing a foreman for the past five years for the company took the witness stand and exposed the company's drive against the UFW and its collaboration with the Teamsters Union. In support, Ramirez had been in charge of the company's wrangling division in Salinas and Atascadero.

He told how management personnel contemplated to get the UFW supporters fired and how they tried to get election victories for the Teamsters Union. All of this was spotted out in great detail by Ramirez over a span of many days. When the evidence became so overwhelming the company announced that it was ready to enter into an agreement with the UF and with the CUB. While denying the allegations against it the company said it was coming to terms "in order to avoid unnecessary and costly expenses."

With this new set of rules and with the UF win roll up victory after victory in the Imperial Valley organizing campaign the stage is now set for a possible statewide election in the Bruce Church properties in which the workers for the first time will have an opportunity to freely express their choice in a representation elec-

Latest in Elections

The UFW has won almost two-thirds of the elections which have been decided according to this same tabulation. The UFW won 101 elections representing 22,284 workers in contrast to the Teamsters who emerged victorious 102 times and represented 12,344 workers. It should be kept in mind that 183 of the elections have been taken place on ranches formerly under contract with the Teamsters and going into the round of elections there were 28,000 workers represented on them.

In only 30 instances have the workers voted for "no union" to represent them. Represented on these ranches were 2,204 workers.

In 163 elections, almost half of all those conducted, the UFW was on the ballot opposing "no union." Some of these were former Teamsters ranches on which that union could not get the required number of authorizations to get on the ballot. Out of the 141 decided elections in this category the UFW won 115, representing 17,526 workers, and not union - the company - emerged victorious 18 times. Represented on these ranches were 1,471 workers. In 25 elections the outcome still remained in doubt.

As each new tabulation is made public the UF win margin of victory continues to grow. It is small wonder that the growers and the Teamsters are trying to stop the elections as reported in the last (December) issue of El Male不得转载.

The Latest in Fashions: Wear A Huelga T-Shirt

Photo by Dan Thorne

Dear the UFW Label:

Highest Quality Black T-Shirts printed in silver with the union logo are now available in women's and men's sizes (small, medium, large) at $1.00 each.

All profit to the union!

Please send this coupon to Rogelio Teran Lee.

1414 W. Olympic Blvd., CA 90015.

I would like ______________ T-Shirts at $1.00 each (including Calif. tax). I am enclosing a check or money order to the United Farm Workers for $______________.

From _____________________________

City _____________________________

State and zip _______________________

Your T-shirt will be sent to you. 

Page 3
El Mulcriadito
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ARE STORE OWNERS GETTING MESSAGE OF NEW FARM LAW?

Are the food store chains going to change their posture in view of the new election law?

Prior to the recent voting of the past four months the most common stance of merchants in their efforts to ignore farm labor problems was to "specify" buying scale produce "in order to best serve their customers with highest quality for the least amount of money."

The California agricultural situation has changed substantially with the election results heavily favoring the United Farm Workers Union, thus concentrating the position of the boycott which has always maintained that the UFW is the true representative of farm workers.

In recent weeks several large food chains, namely Ralph's, Gahway, Patison's, and Thrillmark, have been invited to participate in discussions with UFW. Ralph's boycott Director Leo Fujimoto canvassing possible future activities of the boycott machinery. Representatives of these merchants were informed that in the likelihood of a "selective label boycott" resulting from growers' attempts to sign contracts on ranches won by the UFW, the union will actively and vigorously urge the public to buy only UFW labeled produce. This would naturally occur only on the packing lots of the food stores carrying those particular non-UFW items under dispute.

Labor and religious delegations were also invited to these discussions. Among those present were Miriam Ludwig of the Associated Clothing Workers Union, Manuel Sierra and Charles Bratton from the United Steel Workers Union, and Ellen Barros from the National Association of Letter Carriers Sr. Ray Voj Staehlin, P. Fiehler and P. Dean Flanagan participated.

The outcome of the talks left a certain ambiguity as to definite store policy in the future. A few representatives seemed unwilling to consolidate differences, said Fujimoto, but those who had already experienced the powerful boycott weapon in the past appeared willing of committing themselves to a consideration of current line of conduct. By Tom Ahlswede, president of Ralph's Market, the biggest volume chain store in Los Angeles, said, "We're tired of hearing the battlecry of the boycott." It appeared that in large measure some of the store managers were beginning to look at things in a new light in view of the results of the farm labor law elections.

by the union committees in the plant or by membership. Now the Teamster officials who have in the main ignored the problems of the workers in this plant over the years are busy trying to mend their fences. But it may be too late from all indications.

There have been reports of several other groups of workers in Orange County who have recently decided to leave the Teamster Union. It might be well for the Teamsters to consider more about the welfare of their present members rather than to embark on raids against workers in other unions. And it should be kept in mind that those who first take action against labor solidarity are most often the victims of their own vindictiveness.